MY LIFE
AND A FEW YARNS

ADMIRAL H. L. FLEET

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MY LIFE, AND A FEW YARNS

THE *CONSTANCE*.

MY LIFE, AND A FEW YARNS

BY

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FOREWORD

I COMMENCED this book with the intention of only writing on the Victorian Navy, and the chapter on the *Constance* is the result. But a friendly critic told me that it was rather technical and too impersonal for the general public, so I boldly launched into an autobiography, intending it to be a humble effort on the part of an old fossil to depict life in the Royal Navy during a service of forty-one years, as he found it. After all, it is only by the study of fossils that we are able to arrive at any conclusions as to the period in which they existed.

It is true that we have among the fossils, to mention a few, Tonge, Smollett, Michael Scott, Marryat, Chambre and Hannay, the last the author of that charming book *Singleton Fontenoy, R.N.*, descriptive of naval life in the fifties of the last century. Nicholas and James are more geologists than fossilists, and only give dry details. Laird Clowes has brought up naval history to the year 1900 in a more human fashion, while Rudyard Kipling—well, we all know his gems of naval life. The war has produced a new school, and I have read its works with infinite enjoyment.

I dedicate this ambitious work to the glorious Service in which I passed so many happy years, and (to borrow from Mark Twain) if only a goodly number of its members will show their appreciation by buying a copy, I shall, in more ways than one, be amply rewarded.

Want of space has crowded out descriptions of my tour in India and visit to the Panama Canal, also the Naval History of the West Indies, the cockpit of the French

and British, where Nelson served, and where, at Antigua, he landed for the last time abroad ; where Rodney, Hood, Barrington and Byron fought de Guichen, d'Estaing and de Grasse. But I cannot forbear mentioning a deed that always fascinates me, especially after Zeebrugge. In 1794 the ' Heroic Faulknor ' ran his ship the *Zebra* under the guns of Fort Royal, Martinique, jumped overboard at the head of his crew and carried the fort. One of the bravest of the brave, he fell in command of the *Blanche* in 1795, while capturing the French frigate *Pique*.

H. L. F.

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MY LIFE, AND A FEW YARNS

CHAPTER I

BOYHOOD

Childhood's days now pass before me,
Joys and woes of long ago.
Like a dream they hover o'er me,
Still their echoes come and go.

AN autobiography will be incomplete without some statement of myself and family. The latter is of typical English stock of the best type, and my readers must make their own opinions of the former. My family is of considerable antiquity, and our name is derived from an old English word 'Fleot,' signifying a dweller in a creek; it had its origin in Lincolnshire, where some de Fletes had their home in the thirteenth century; some of them emigrated to Bucks, and is the branch from which I am descended. The 'de' seems to have been dropped about that time, and the name was spelt variously as Flete, Fleete, and ffleete; it is only met with now in its present form. It occurs occasionally in historical records; one was a Member of Parliament in the reign of Charles, another was Lord Mayor of London, and in the seventeenth century Captain Henry Fleet sailed up Chesapeake Bay, where a Cape is named after him. My immediate ancestors were landowners. I have met others of my name during my wanderings. At New York an interested Fleet called upon me, and seemed to know more about my family than I did myself, and a Professor Fleet of Harvard visited my people in England, but it is not a common name.

I have often been chaffed about my name, and some of my friends used to call me 'Squadrons' in addition to

various other nicknames conferred upon me, but it must be allowed that it is a suitable one for my profession! At times it has led to some embarrassing, although amusing, incidents, such as some years ago when returning from a trip to the Panama Canal I arrived at Manchester. Nothing would convince the manager of the Great Central Hotel that I was not 'The Admiral of the Fleet'; he was most solicitous about what arrangements I wished to make as to the disposal of my dispatches, and I only pacified him by consenting to allow him to engage a compartment for me in the London express. On the following day I steamed out of the station, bowing with great *empressement* to a party of officials headed by the manager. It was a great moment, and only needed a red carpet to make it semi-regal.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century my great-grandfather, a younger member of the family, emigrated to London, where he established himself as a West Indian merchant in Fenchurch Street. In those days such people resided over their counting-houses (as they were called); there, in 1818, my father was born. He was the eldest of four children, two boys and two girls. Owing to the untimely death of my grandfather he was compelled to take up the business and give up his university career. With his brother James for a partner the firm became well known as 'Fleet Brothers.' One of the girls died young, and the other married an eminent Divine, Charles Alford, who later became Bishop of Victoria, Hong Kong.

My mother was Esther Faithfull, born in 1823, a daughter of the Reverend Ferdinand Faithfull, Headley Rectory, near Epsom, Surrey. The Faithfulls are an old English family with many ramifications. I can recall the old church and the staircase outside on the south wall which gave ingress to a small gallery where the élite performed their devotions. Music was supplied by a small, and not too talented, orchestra in the belfry gallery. A story is told of the double-bass performer (who rather fancied himself) that one day he dropped his rosin over the rail just as the clerk, who sat under the pulpit, gave out the hymn in accordance with the custom of the day. It was "Who is the King of Glory?" The fellow leant over and said, "Hand me up that rosin and I'll soon show you."

My father used to ride over from Croydon (the limit of the railway in those days) to do his courting; the

marriage took place in 1846, and they lived in Tollington Park. There I was born on May 1, 1850, having been preceded by two other boys. The eldest, John Faithfull, entered the Indian Civil Service in 1865, and served with distinction. Awarded a Companionship of the Indian Empire, he retired in 1897, on—what was then—a good pension. Among other attainments he was a noted Sanskrit scholar. He published several works on India, became Epigraphist to the Government, and was Hon. Secretary to the Royal Asiatic Society from 1905 until his death in 1917. In 1912 he was awarded the Society's gold medal. My second brother died in adult age.

But London was too confined for my country-bred mother, and we emigrated to the hamlet of Penge, Surrey, where my father took a small property, and with his brother for a neighbour, built a house. Penge was quite a small place then, perhaps about twenty houses. There were a few more residences in our neighbourhood, but ours looked out into the open country. At the bottom of our fields ran a brook which constituted the boundary between Surrey and Kent. Here we led a happy country life, our own dairy, a pony for the boys—an adept at kicking us off—and a smart cob for the mistress to drive. Six more children were born here, totalling up to the respectable number of nine, consisting of seven boys and two girls. One boy and a girl died in infancy, and two sons soon after reaching adult age. I have already spoken of my eldest brother; of the two other servivors, one entered Holy Orders and holds a—so called—living in Berks. In addition to his clerical abilities he is a musician of no mean talents, and would have made his mark in that direction. Indeed, all our family had some talent that way, and in my earlier days I could vamp out an accompaniment to my songs on the piano and perform on the guitar, now laid aside. Many a time have I been invited to go on board another ship and bring my 'Bumblejar,' as my friends were pleased to call it. My other brother achieved great success on the stage under the *nom de théâtre* of Rutland Barrington, his chief hits being in Gilbert and Sullivan's operas. My sister married Charles Farrington Cumberlege, an official in the Bank of England, from which he has now retired.

As children, we had no occasion to complain of lack of minstrelsy. My parents used to give musical parties, on which occasion we were sent to bed early. When the

concert was in full swing we used to cajole the nurse into letting us steal out of the nursery and sit on the stairs, where we listened to renderings of "Who will o'er the downs?" "Ye shepherds, tell me," and other musical vagaries until Morpheus prevailed over the Muses. The nurse was one of the old type of domestic which may now be classed with the Dodo. She remained with us over forty years, latterly more as a friend than as a servant. She was 'great' on the subject of the Duke of Wellington, and poured into my ears a wealth of information with regard to that famous and patriotic soldier, whom she regarded as the saviour of his country. One of her favourite expressions was, "Lord have mercy on us, and keep the French from us."

In 1858 the great Donati Comet appeared, and nurse told us that if it wagged its tail it would set fire to the earth, a popular superstition of the time. The fateful day arrived, and, to my great relief, it rained hard all day, and I felt that even if the comet did behave in such a cruel manner it would have no chance against such a downpour. We were also terrified about this time by another and different kind of occurrence, namely, the activities of one 'Spring-Heel Jack.' This worthy used to amuse himself after dark by frightening women and children. He would suddenly jump over the hedge in front of them. As these jumps were phenomenal, it was supposed that he had springs in his heels, hence the sobriquet. After a time the hunt for him got very brisk and his activities ceased.

I have described Penge as a Hamlet; when we settled there it was too small to possess a debating society, but a village near possessed one, and an incident connected with it may be worth repeating.

The subject chosen was a small tribal war in which we were engaged. We will call the speakers A and B, and the chairman C. A proceeded to elaborate his theme, and in the course of it said that the 'Aborrygynes' had not been treated fairly, or with consideration. B then took the floor and remarked in criticism that he did not agree at all with the previous speaker, for he thought that they had been accorded all the treatment that such 'Bellygerrents' deserved. It now fell to C to sum up, which he did with great gusto, finishing by stating that while he congratulated the previous speakers upon the able manner with which they had dealt with the subject,

he thought that they had both used words which did not appear in the English 'voccaballory'!

Which reminds me of another story. In the days when education was not State-provided by a paternal Government, but depended more on local enterprise and charity, a worthy benefactor of the local school (who was not very erudite) invited a friend from London to hold an examination of the scholars. His friend went to the school and on his return was asked what he thought of the general intelligence displayed. He replied, "Not much. Why, not one of them could tell me who wrote *Hamlet*. But one boy did put up his hand and say, 'I know *I* didn't, Sir.'"

"What was his name?" inquired his host.

"Tommy Sharpe," replied the other.

"*That* boy! I shouldn't wonder if the little devil did though," was the amazing rejoinder.

But to get back to our village. After the great Exhibition of 1851, the immense glass structure was taken down and reconstructed on the ridge of Sydenham Hill, and named the Crystal Palace, whence it dominated the surrounding country. Then houses began to spring up. Season tickets were very reasonable and the entourage most attractive. The interior was well kept and full of fascinating sights. The statuary in the different courts was most interesting, and the Alhambra Court quite a work of art. There was a picture gallery with some fine works in it, and one section was consecrated to heroes of the Victoria Cross. A good gymnasium was provided, and finally there was the tropical portion (kept at a suitable temperature all the year round) in which were birds and animals. This part of the building was burned down.

There was a reading-room much affected by our elders; it was not in our line. My father was very proficient at chess, and used to spend a good deal of his leisure there. He established quite a reputation by defeating the celebrated automaton chess player. This automaton was a weird Oriental figure that must have been controlled by a human brain. The figure was seated on a box, and it is possible that a small boy may have been stowed away in it; anyway it was actuated by a chess player of no mean capacity, for it usually defeated opponents with ease. After this my father developed his play a great deal, and used sometimes to play simultaneous games

with half a dozen players, usually defeating the majority. But chess was not a boy's game.

Every day, August Mann used to lead his fine orchestra and give finished performances. On Saturdays a really good concert was provided, at which all the notable singers of the day appeared (Patti, Lemmens-Sherrington, Belle Cole, Sims Reeves, Foli and Santley occur most readily to me), and Coward played every evening on the magnificent organ. The Handel Festival was held every three years and drew immense audiences. It was a treasure-house for music lovers.

There were variety entertainments. Blondin the man who crossed Niagara on the tight-rope, Leotard the trapezist, Anderson the Wizard of the North, and many others. Every winter we were treated to a pantomime on a profuse scale, given on the great stage in the centre transept. It was a paradise for small boys.

The gardens (laid out by Paxton) were superb and kept most scrupulously. On gala days the fountains played. In the grounds groups of Aborigines, faithfully represented, struck terror into the juvenile breast until familiarity bred contempt, and weird prehistoric monsters with names like Pterodactyl created awe and horror. We never became quite accustomed to the latter.

When Jack Frost was propitious, there was grand skating on the large basins, and in a small lake, rather secluded, I enjoyed many a cooling swim in hot weather. But in after-years a lamentable decay set in and when visited the result was saddening, for it had grown decrepit and had not grown old becomingly.

Then came the construction of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway to further infringe on rusticity. Thousands of navvies invaded our peaceful neighbourhood and the solitary pub reaped a golden (though evanescent) harvest, no doubt profiteering to the limit. Every Saturday a pandemonium was let loose and drunken hordes surged over the village green. Day by day the embankment advanced, all the work being done by manual labour, no modern appliances, until it vanished in the distance, leaving behind it the trail of the serpent.

With the completion of the railway and the establishment of a local station, our exclusiveness was gone ; small houses sprung up like mushrooms, and it was evident that the tentacles of the huge city were reaching out and grasping us, and that it was only a matter of time

before it became a mere suburb. A few years later we trekked to Grove Park, Chiswick.

During the period touched upon, I spent a good deal of my time at Headley, running about wild, and picking up perfunctory education from a curate. Here I imbibed a love for the woods, wild animals and birds, which has never left me. The country round is lovely, and from the celebrated Boxhill, close by, can be obtained a panoramic view which I believe is unrivalled in the South of England.

My grandfather had been a clerk in the Admiralty before joining the Church, and had seen and conversed with Nelson. I was never tired of being told this, and I believe it first implanted the maritime germ in my breast that was brought to fruition later. He had been fond of hunting, and able to indulge in it until an increasing family counselled certain economies and necessitated its discontinuance, but he always kept horses, and I drove about the country with my grandmother in great enjoyment except when it included 'calling,' for that entailed good behaviour and best clothes.

How beautiful were the woods when the merry month of May wakened nature into gladness; carpeted with bluebells, later on with ferns and orchids, in one hollow lilies of the valley that filled the air with fragrance. Daffodils abounded, and every little pond had its water-lilies and a pair of water-hens that seemed to own it. Wild animals which could be studied, with due precaution, and from the convenient shelter of a hedge I once watched a vixen and three cubs at play until the mother, growing tired or suspicious, rounded them up into the security of a thicket, and often have I seen the wily stoat or weasel in pursuit of its quarry. Across the rectory fields one day poor Renard stole, so jaded and tired that my heart went out to him, a feeling eradicated soon after by one of excitement as the hounds in full cry swept into view with all the accompaniment of huntsmen, horns and field.

Then, as an alternative, there was the wide expanse of undulating common competing with the lure of the woods, rivalling its colours with the glories of gorse and heather and sharing with it the melody of song-birds. Here nested the plover, lark, linnet and wheatear, the latter living in deserted rabbit holes, of which there always seemed a number to let. In the coppices near the house the nightingales called and trilled during the

mating season. Martins built under the eaves and swallows nested in the barns, an easy climb for an inquisitive boy. Tomtits built in all sorts of unlikely places, and the golden-crested wren had a wonderful structure under the bough of a fir-tree. Warblers, whitethroats, thrushes and blackbirds enlivened the garden and took toll of the fruit, making payment in melody, while the busy bee lived up to its character. There were several hives in the kitchen-garden and I got my first lesson in natural history. By trying how big a bag could be made, I imprisoned some bees in my left hand as I caught them. About three or four captures had been made, when, as if by mutual agreement, they all stung me! No more bee hunting for me.

From the hills near the church the grandstand of Epsom racecourse is visible, and on the race days the course was black with humanity. My mother told me that as children they were always confined to the house on race days but that my grandfather went out for the day to 'visit friends!'

All good things come to an end, and at the age of ten a presentation to St. Paul's School fell to my lot, my stay there as a day boy, lasting for nearly four years, during which time the railway took me to and fro. The school stood at that time in the churchyard and was an imposing structure somewhat majestic. Big school was over the cloisters, which were protected from vulgar intrusion by an iron grating in the form of network, for the school was founded about 1509 by John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's toward the close of the reign of Henry VII, and the pious founder ordained that the number of scholars should be limited to 153, in accordance with the miraculous draught of fishes as given by St. John, hence the net. September 1860 beheld me a unit of the shoal.

Dr. Kynaston, a very talented man, was headmaster. The masters lived in houses on each side of the school and took in a few boarders. I started in the second form, of which there were eight, and left in the fifth.

There was no playground worthy of the name. The cloisters were dark, and our games had to be suited to the confined space and were very rough. I often went home with my clothes torn, and once accompanied by a black eye. Those who wished to work could do so, others just floated along. It must be admitted that I belonged to the last category, for I was one of a coterie composed

of boys of like sentiment; we sat at preparation and discussed anything but the day's lessons, with the result that we had to get a move on at the last few minutes. But I fully realize now that the tone of the school was good. The Captain of the school always opened the day, and closed it, by reading prayers in Latin, and it was my ambition to do likewise, the fates decreed otherwise. On the walls were many tablets bearing the names of distinguished Paulines, among them the great Duke of Marlborough, and Milton. The school has a long list to its credit, and the good Dean must feel that his life's work is not wasted. There was a good deal of caning, but most of us preferred it to the alternative of hundreds of lines.

The education was almost entirely classical and mathematical. There was a French master for whom we had much contempt; it was the vogue. The school was splendidly endowed and had many excellent exhibitions, and any one going up to a university naturally dug out all he knew at classics and mathematics to get one. The consequence was that I got ploughed in English history and geography when I went up for the Navy. On the other hand, I have never forgotten my Latin and, to a lesser degree, Greek. The only prize I won at St. Paul's was for arithmetic, and a handsome calf-bound copy of Wordsworth's *Greece* with the school arms on the cover is still in my possession.

My going up for the Navy was entirely unpremeditated and the result of a visit paid us by a Naval Officer. His anecdotes and cheery demeanour quite captivated me, and I thought that if all sailors were like Captain Dyer they must be fine fellows and I would like to join them. So nothing would do until my people had been worried into getting me a nomination, which was required in those days, and they procured it through a connection in the Service.

It was decided that a 'crammer' was needful, and I was sent to the Rev. T. Knight at St. Mary's Hall, Southsea, to be stuffed with history and geography, at which that gentleman and his staff were adepts. The cramming resulted in my passing fourth in the June batch of 1864. Naturally my impressions of St. Mary's Hall are vague, but I have a vivid remembrance of my first escape from death. We used to bathe off the beach, and on one occasion the current was too strong for me; I grew tired,

began to struggle and sink. I screamed out for help, my chief thought being that it was hard luck to be cut off so young. I don't believe in the idea that in such cases a man's mind is occupied with the previous events of his life, I know mine wasn't. I opened my mouth and let forth what I believed to be a very powerful S.O.S., but my friends afterwards told me it was more like a drowning kitten ; anyway, the master heard it, and rushing in, carried me to safety on the beach, where I lay in a state of collapse for some time.

After the examination I returned home triumphant, my thoughts full of new kit in which jackets with brass buttons and caps with badges predominated. When I first put the uniform on I behaved very much like W. Gilbert's heavy dragoon as regards looking in the glass, but I trust not as regards the conceit ; still, a certain amount of 'side' is excusable on such an occasion. I believe it is now called 'swank.' Now when I meet a newly caught young Nelson, it is always with sympathy, for I know what the lad's sensations are. So passed three happy weeks, the appointed day for joining the *Britannia* arrived, I made my farewells and set off for Paddington *en route* for Dartmouth.

Before introducing my readers to the *Britannia,* a few remarks or reflections on the period just treated may not be out of place. We were then passing through what is popularly described as the 'Mid Victorian Era.' Sometimes it is referred to by the present generation with a scarcely veiled smile of derision or contemptuous allusion.

With the exception of a few minor campaigns of no great importance, the Empire had enjoyed peace and great prosperity since the decisive Battle of Waterloo until the Crimean War, followed closely by the tragic outbreak of the Indian Mutiny. My memories of the latter (being only a child) are somewhat nebulous, but they are sufficiently vivid for me to state that neither of them affected the general home tranquillity to any great extent. The forces engaged were not large ; ridiculously small compared to our recent terrible experience ; and only seemed to affect a small portion of our population, namely, that in close connection with the regular forces. War hardly affected us in the United Kingdom. I don't mean that the people were not interested in it, but it did not excite undue attention, although the finish, especially that of the Mutiny, was hailed with relief.

There was not the astonishing amount of information through newspapers and telegrams with which we are now deluged. *The Times* was a sixpenny publication and beyond the means of the proletariat, the *Morning Post* cost fourpence. There were other papers, but I cannot name them with certainty. The *Illustrated London News* must have had a monopoly in its particular line. There was *Punch*, and I can recall two others on similar lines—*Fun* and *Judy*; they became defunct after a few years. These are all the periodicals that occur to me. There were also magazines, but not of the sort that a boy cared to read. Now if you approach a bookstall for something to wile away the tedium of a railway journey the choice is so bewildering that it takes a strong mind to make a decision—whether, for instance, to improve it by purchasing *Discovery*, amaze it with *Titbits*, or amuse it with *Comic Cuts*! Moreover, many of these enterprising journals hold out a lure by providing an insurance on your life, to be paid, in the event of your being killed in a railway accident, to your next of kin, providing you have a copy of the paper on you. We had none of the illustrated dailies that depict the varying scenes of life with such fidelity, portraying fashionable beauties, brides and their grooms, members of the aristocracy, actresses, divorcees, and condemned criminals with scrupulous impartiality.

The telegraph wires were only just beginning to be used, and chronic procrastinators had to write their fictitious excuses instead of wiring them at the eleventh hour. The advent of a telegram (not yet 'wire') was regarded with suspicion as generally conveying distressful news; alas! it only too often does now.

The means of transit were not so generous and certainly not so comfortable as at present. I can just remember some of the old third-class carriages that were no better than open trucks, and not so good as those used to transport cattle at the present time. The annual rush to the seaside was beyond the proletariat and they took their rest at home with more advantage to their pockets and constitutions. The better classes usually went off to the most convenient place, which was Brighton in our case, where we annually migrated for a holiday. I don't think it attracted the Israelites as it does now.

The London, Chatham and Dover was not completed, and the London and Brighton had its terminus at London

Bridge, which all travellers had to cross by cab, omnibus or on foot. The cabs ('growlers') were usually shocking affairs, and the drivers, often in the last stage of decrepitude, hardly ever polite, not always sober, and always most extortionate. The hansoms were much better; the drivers took a pride in them and often owned an animal that looked like a bit of blood. It used to be called the gondola of London. The omnibus was a veritable boneshaker and the floor was strewed with straw: it was considered by some to be a rather swagger thing to sit beside the drivers, who were a distinct class of their own; the smarter ones wore white bell-toppers in summer, doubtless given to them by one of their patrons.

We were singularly free from the prevailing hustle of the present day, and were all the happier for it. Did it come from the United States or did we create it ourselves? Will it, like Frankenstein's Monster, turn and destroy us? With the advent of the taxi and the flying-machine we are able to carry on hustling still more, and soon every one will have a private aeroplane in his backyard, as well as a motor or sidecar. Add wireless telegraphy and finally wireless telephony, and then some law will have to be passed that we mustn't all talk at once.

The streets of London were never too safe, but they are now positively dangerous, for chauffeurs *et hoc genus omne* seem to take a delight in close shaves. If it were not for the stalwart policeman (in whom we still have confidence in spite of strikes), certain crossings would be impracticable. Vanished, too, are the attractions of certain West-end streets in the way of horses and vehicles, splendid turnouts with their liveried attendants, not dressed in leather jerkins and peaked caps and—*horribile dictu*—smoking cigarettes or pipes! It does not seem so long ago that one 'did' the park as much for the pleasure of seeing the turnouts as of meeting friends and admiring pretty girls in smart frocks. Who is going to watch motor-cars, however much they cost?

Women did not have so much freedom. It was considered 'fast' for a girl to drive in a hansom, and the watchful eye of the chaperon was ever on guard. Emancipation, together with the franchise, has burst upon the fair sex; but I am not going to dilate on this subject, as it bristles with prickles. One remark and one only. Will the newly emancipated please recognize that with equal rights come equal responsibility?

With the newspaper correspondent and the freedom of the press has arrived increased publicity, and no details of public or even private life seem too insignificant for publication. As we know only too well, some affairs better buried in oblivion become painfully notorious. It is a fact that certain crimes are frequently followed by similar ones : perhaps such indiscriminate publication puts it into the heads of these poor things. Who shall say? It is not uncommon for a woman who has committed a crime to be deluged with offers of marriage while the case is still under trial or even when she has received her sentence. It is a curious and baffling phase.

Perhaps it is owing to the above that we seem to live in a more immoral age, an age in which the great majority seem abandoned to pure Hedonism ; most of us seemingly living for the pursuit of pleasure and continually rushing from one enjoyment to another. Under such circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the home life as the Mid Victorian knew it no longer attracts and that divorce has become epidemic.

CHAPTER II

THE *BRITANNIA*

Britannia, the pride of the ocean.

ON arrival at Paddington I met more cadets whose new clothes and self-conscious airs proclaimed that they were also newly fledged. Naturally, we gravitated together, many of us thus commencing lifelong friendships.

I have before me the list of my batch of June, 1864; it contains forty-eight names: all were present that day. Analysis is rather saddening, and I shall not attempt more than to remark that only three became Admirals, two on the active list and one (your humble servant) on the retired list. Five more became Commanders, of whom three retired with the rank of Captain.

Travelling by the Great Western was even then quite comfortable. The broad gauge had not yet been discarded. We travelled by the express known as the 'Flying Dutchman,' and at Newton Abbot the Dartmouth portion was detached and pulled up at Kingswear, where we were decanted on the shore abreast the *Britannia*. We feasted our eyes on the stately three-decker that was to be our home for some time and our introduction to the Navy.

With her massive hull and lofty spars, the *Britannia* was an imposing sight, but the guns (she was pierced for 120) had been removed to improve the accommodation.

We found a launch and flatboat waiting, and were soon alongside the ship; the other cadets had already joined, and we were received by an official, who in our ignorance we took for an officer, and to whom we were proportionally humble. I addressed him as Sir, to which he replied, "You must not 'Sir' me, my little man." This mixture of respect and condescension rather bewildered me, and left me in doubt as to who he could be.

I found out later that he was the Master-at-Arms, and that he was known to the cadets as the 'Affable Gent.' The Master-at-Arms is the head of the ship's police. No doubt in past times his function was a very different one; probably he was an instructor in swordsmanship. He is known in the Service as the Jaundy, most undoubtedly a corruption of Gendarme. He performs the duty of Provost-Marshal at courts martial, is in charge of the prisoner, and on such occasions wears a sword.

He turned us over to the care of a marine servant, one of whom was allotted to every six of us. The marine led us to the chestroom, where we found our belongings.

Cadets were entered in batches every three months; a batch averaged about fifty, and as the period of training was fifteen months, there were generally about three hundred cadets on board. Among ourselves the batches were known as Cheeky New Fellows, Three Monthers, Six Monthers, Nine Monthers, and Passing Out Numbers. The two last were the swagger terms (officially we were terms), and were allowed to carry 'Togies' (short lengths of cord with a Mathew Walker knot on the end), for the purpose of administering punishment on the juniors. They were privileged to 'Ask names,' and make other personal inquiries. The Six Monthers had none of these privileges, and could only exercise them surreptitiously.

The togies were not much used, however, and there was very little bullying. Among boys of approximately the same age any one attempting such a thing might have caught a Tartar. But there were certain standard tricks which were played off on new arrivals. One was to inquire if you had been weighed. Of course you had not, so you were hurried off to the model bowsprit and seated in the bight of the crupper chain, then you were given a good swing, and at the psychological moment the chain was slipped. You either got hurt or escaped with a good bump. Eyeslaps was another form of amusement. When a rosy-faced cadet, sleeping tranquilly in his hammock offered a tempting target, it was usually irresistible. The operator slapped the exposed optic either with his hand or the heel of a slipper, the results being rather startling to the sleeper, who, dazed and somewhat pained, did not realize for some time what had happened, during which the villain of the piece had made his exit.

There was a more dangerous game which necessitated the co-operation of two cadets. One of them engaged a

gratified junior in conversation, and the other noiselessly went down on all fours behind him. At the right moment the former gave his dupe a smart push, the result being that he generally executed an involuntary back-somersault over the accomplice's body. This was a bit dangerous. But public opinion was against bullying, and as pointed out, similarity of age was a great check to it.

There was no immorality. A case did occur during my time, and the authorities acted with promptitude ; the culprit was severely birched and dismissed. The same punishment was awarded a youth who developed lax notions of *meum* and *tuum*. Detected in the act of helping himself to grub at the tuckshop without paying for it, he received the same sentence, as did another who cruelly illtreated a cat.

It may interest the reader to learn how the operation of birching was conducted. The cadets were paraded on the maindeck four deep, facing outboard. Between two of the gunports was a table with a mattress spread on it. The Commander, accompanied by the duty Lieutenant, was in charge. The Surgeon attended with a sick-bayman, who provided water and other paraphernalia. The Master-at-Arms then brought in the culprit with a ship's corporal *en suite* to administer the dose. The Commander then made a short address in which he emphasized the heinousness of the offence. The wrists and ankles of the offender were securely fastened to the legs of the table, a sufficient portion of his anatomy exposed, and the corporal did the rest by laying on fifteen of the best with a formidable birch.

On the first occasion that my term witnessed it, one of our number fainted, and the promptitude with which we rendered first aid by pouring water over him was very creditable. He sat down afterwards in the messroom where some of his friends continued the treatment until he looked like a drowned rat. Heaven preserve us from our friends!

On the whole, punishments were few and lenient. They mostly consisted of stoppage of leave, and extra drill. The former is unnatural. Why confine any one to the limited area of a ship with the shore staring him in the face? With regard to extra drill, it is good for the body and keeps the mind occupied, but should not be carried to excess. Some commanding officers are apt to forget that they were not always little tin gods.

Discipline in the *Britannia* was mild but firm, as it must be with high-spirited boys, but we were carefully looked after. For example, there was the great fight between Manners and Childs; it took some time to arrange, and came off in the presence of a large number of cadets. Although a secluded spot in the heart of a wood had been chosen, the whole proceeding was watched by a corporal (as we found later), who would have interfered in the interests of fair play if necessary. As it was, the affair was conducted admirably, and after a long contest was given a draw, a tribute to the gameness of both combatants.

Our education was extraordinarily well arranged. We were divided into classes and taken by very able instructors who crammed navigation, nautical astronomy, plane and spherical trigonometry into us with astounding rapidity and success. Most of us had never heard of such subjects, yet in fifteen months, when the time arrived for us to pass out, we had become thoroughly well grounded, and the majority passed creditable examinations.

The art of seamanship, and it *was* seamanship in those days, was not neglected. The lieutenants instructed us, assisted by an excellent boatswain, but we thought it rather *infra dig.* to be instructed by a warrant officer. We were to find out later what an invaluable class he represented.

Seamanship as represented by masts, yards, rigging and the handling of ships under sail is a lost art. It died hard, and in my opinion might have expired sooner than it did. But what a fine art it was! The glorious and satisfactory result of handling a ship under sail, the drill aloft which gave us a type of seaman that will never be known again, and the apparently complex system of rigging, the result of centuries of experience, constituted a fine art, and the student who became a master of it deserved a degree.

Each class was in charge of a cadet-captain chosen from the two senior terms, who paraded us and saw to it that we were properly dressed. They sat at the head of the table at meals and could exercise much influence by their example. In addition, there were two chief-captains to whom we looked up with great awe; they seemed to wear a sort of halo!

The food was plain and plentiful. After evening prayers every cadet was given a slice of good wholesome

plum cake. By some extraordinary freak of boyish etiquette it was not considered good form to eat it. We used to go down to the chestroom and give it to the sentries, who provided themselves with bags for the reception of this welcome addition to their rations. Many a time we stifled our sighs as we handed it over to the expectant Joey, for boys are always hungry.

There was a tuck shop close to the landing pier, for small boys (albeit naval officers in embryo) are like small girls and are fond of sweet things. We were not allowed into Dartmouth, but the country was free to us, and we could go where we liked ; one result was that raids on the apples were rather common during the season : it was considered no sin to rob an orchard.

The ship had only arrived from Portland in the previous September, and as yet there was no cricket or football ground, but we had the 'Blue Boats,' a considerable number of four-oared gigs, one six-oared, and a dinghy, the *Pet*. They were very popular. Many a pleasant trip they afforded, especially on whole holidays, when we could pull up to Totnes or go fishing outside. There were some grand walks about the country, and Brixham was a favourite port of call, and to land on that side we disembarked at Kingswear Ferry. One day it was announced that cadets landing on that side would have to pay toll to the proprietor. We were a conservative lot, and resented what we considered to be an unjust innovation. Were we not budding officers and entitled to consideration as such? Accordingly the word went round and the following Sunday nearly all hands piled into the flat that went to the ferry. We landed in great force and marched up the road in a body ; the official collector approached and demanded payment, only to be met with a refusal ; a heated argument followed that was terminated by a rush *en masse*, and with cheers the crowd swept over his prostrate body. This little affair cost us about ten shillings each, as a summons for assault and battery was taken out against us, but the toll was withdrawn for the future. We gained our point, but ' 'Twas a famous Victory.'

In summer time we bathed, and all the year round had a shower bath on turning out. Also a certain number were told off for the hot bath every night. There was no excuse for being ' fuggy.'

We regarded the officers with great admiration, and the chief instructor was very popular, but then he had a

great deal to say in the appointment of cadet-captains ; of course we were not influenced by that, oh dear no.

In the evening the band played, and we danced to our heart's content, and on Saturday nights, in accordance with Service traditions, we had singsongs, often a good deal of talent to the fore. In fact, the *Britannia* days afforded a good deal of pleasure and happiness.

The *Britannia* was jury-rigged. She had her own lower masts and a frigate's tophamper. We spent a good deal of our spare time aloft, and no cadet was of any account until he had gone over the futtock-shrouds instead of through the lubber's-hole. For the benefit of the uninitiated I will endeavour to explain. Nearly at the head of the lower mast was the Top (a platform) ; in a ship of the *Britannia's* class it was about the size of a small room. Among other purposes it served as a resting place, and could hold quite a number of men. The topmast rigging came down to the edge of the top and the lower rigging reached the mast on a level with the top. To take the strain of the topmast rigging each shroud was reinforced by a futtock-shroud, i.e. one which led from the edge of the top to a chain collar round the lower mast several feet below the top ; the rattlings of the lower rigging ceased where it met the futtocks, so the latter was rattled from there to the edge of the top. It is evident that a person using them would be climbing outwards, back down. The alternative was the lubber's-hole, a trap hatch close to the eyes of the rigging.

Certainly it required a little nerve to use the futtocks for the first time, but habitude is everything and the topmen were just as nimble over them as they were when running up the lower rigging. But it required remembrance of the adage 'Never let go of one rope until you have hold of another.'

Some of the cadets were very venturesome aloft and performed hazardous, if not foolhardy, feats. The crowning test was to stand on the main truck. This is the extreme end of the royal mast (the top one of all), and the truck is about the size of a soup plate. It would have been impossible but for the assistance of the lightning rod, which stood up about two feet and could be grasped by the knees. But it required caution and confidence—a good deal of each. Not many ventured on it, but I felt that I must have a try at it although not relishing the prospect ; however, with the encouragement

of a pal I managed it and felt no little elated, more particularly when I was on deck again. It is true that the topgallant masts were housed, which considerably reduced the height from two hundred feet to about one hundred and sixty, but it required a much steadier head than I possess now, and I never had any inclination to repeat the performance. During my service a ship went out of Malta with the paying-off pendant flying and a man standing on each truck ; it was a very nervy thing to do with the ship under way. But the upper-yardmen of those days were the smartest men in the ship and a class of their own.

During my time in the ship we were invited to witness the launch of a barque that had been built near by. We attended in great force and a large party availed themselves of permission and went on board ; when afloat we set to work to roll her—an easy job, as she was so light—by running from one side to another. We succeeded only too well, and for one agonizing moment we all thought she was going over. We hung on for dear life, and to our extreme relief she gave up the notion and behaved sensibly, but I don't think that the builder invited any more parties on such occasions.

It now became apparent that the ship did not afford sufficient accommodation, and after many rumours the *Hindostan*, an old two-decker, made her appearance and was moored up-stream of the *Britannia*, to which she was connected by a bridge.

Next to appear was the *Dapper*, a small gunboat of that period ; she was attached to the ship as a tender (naturally anything properly attached to another ought to be tender to it), and was used to take cadets out for short cruises. She was barque rigged, and we used to drill aloft—with much help from the crew. A cadet fell from aloft at one of these drills ; with dire forebodings we ran to pick him up, and to our great relief found him only a bit shaken. He had fallen on the forehatch in a sitting position, and the hatch it was that suffered, not the cadet. It was no good as a hatch any more. How well I remember Arthur Dove ; he was a youngster of great promise who would have gone far, but when a Lieutenant was lost in the *Atalanta*, a twenty-six gun sailing frigate that was commissioned to replace the *Eurydice*, of the same class.

The latter was lost off the Isle of Wight in 1878.

Only three survivors were picked up. The maindeck ports were triced up ; a terrific squall struck her, she heeled over until the ports were under water and lost her buoyancy. It was Sunday afternoon, and, of course, all hands were below enjoying an afternoon caulk, otherwise the ports might have been lowered in time. The *Atalanta* was lost with all hands two years after. She sailed from Bermuda and was never heard of again. The Admiralty then gave up seagoing sailing ships, which seemed a peculiar line to take.

At length my batch became passing-out numbers, and enjoyed all the privileges. One of them consisted in turning the cap peak up as much as possible ; it was called 'Seagoing' ; in those days we wore a little close-fitting cap with a straight peak. Later on a loose-topped cap known as a gunnery-cap came in, but it was not very popular ; the present cap is modelled on it, and has also been adopted by the Army, that has done the same with the gold oak-leaved peak formerly distinctive of the Navy. But the junior Service has a quiet way of annexing good points from us, especially when they are accompanied by pretty pretties.

Some of our term (myself among them) became Captains of cadets and sported a gold stripe and silver anchor. It was a gratifying ornament, very much so when on leave. What peacocks we are!

Finally the examinations for passing out came along. They were over at last and the prize-giving day arrived in due course. Some one of eminence generally performed this ceremony, and in our case we were honoured by a First Lord of the Admiralty. In the Service he was chiefly celebrated for the shocking hats he wore. I believe that in the world of fashion he had achieved great distinction in the same direction ; of course, it is as well to be celebrated for something, and perhaps it shoved him into the good billet he held, who knows? At all events he led a more active life than his prototype in *Pinafore*. It was generally believed that he allowed his valet to wear these hats until they became reasonably shabby.

A great parade was made, and after the usual speeches, without which no function is complete, and listened to by us with impatient boredom, the Chief Instructor read out the names ; at the fifteenth I heard, to my inexpressible relief, my own, and I received a first-class certificate. It carried with it the rank of midshipman and entitled me

to sport the white patch at once instead of the white cord of a naval cadet. Some of us received prizes. The great majority were collared—as is often the case—by the genius who passed first. This super-youth convinced himself, after a short trial, that the Navy was not his forte, with which the Navy agreed. He left, and passed direct into Woolwich, and, on leaving, again took premier honours, but even that did not suit, and again he cleared out, and this time I presume went into diplomacy. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*

It reminds me of an officer in an American warship whom I met in after-years. He was the Paymaster, and said to me, "I was originally a Lootenant-Colonel in the Light Cavalry, then I transferred to the Advisory Board, and now I find myself in this blankity blank Pay Department." I thought him a 'Pooh Bah' on a small scale.

Then followed our final separation. We had not been together very long, but most of us had formed friendships that were to be lasting; we knew the best and worst of each other, and I believe a good definition of a true friend to be "One who knows all about you, but likes you still." Bright happy lads, so many different temperaments, so diverse and yet the same stamp on all, the hallmark of the Service. Most of them have passed over, but there is still one of the old lot who thinks often of them and bears them in memory.

We went up a large party to Paddington, full of animal spirits and not too decorous I fear. Peashooters were in evidence on such occasions. I must say no more. As we skirted Dawlish we saw two large frigates standing into the bay; we learned that they were the *Constance* and *Arethusa*; to me they were most fascinating objects, and I determined to try for one. By working a little interest (there was a good deal of that sort of thing in those days), my appointment to the former was gazetted but not before I had joined the *Victory,* guardship at Portsmouth, on the expiration of a short leave.

CHAPTER III

THE *VICTORY*

His ship the *Victory* named,
Long be that victory famed!
For victory crown'd the day.

I JOINED the *Victory* in August 1865; she was the flagship at Portsmouth and flew the flag of the Commander-in-Chief. At the present time the old ship still flies the flag, and long may she continue to do so. She is more of a show ship than anything else; relics have been collected and deposited on board and thirty-two guns of her old armament restored and mounted. It is satisfactory to know that she is visited by thousands of patriotic people.

At that time, the memory of Nelson had somewhat faded, and it was left for the Navy League and a distinguished American, Admiral A. T. Mahan, to revive national interest and establish the Nelson cult which has been instrumental in arousing our pride in the man who is certainly the people's Hero. We youngsters were well acquainted with his name, but it is doubtful whether it went much beyond that and the fact that he won Trafalgar, falling in the hour of victory. We approached her with feelings of admiration, for she presented a fine appearance, as did all those three-deckers; they were some of the finest products of man.

The three tiers of guns, their black portholes accentuated by the broad white stripes, the lofty sides and towering spars above, the tracery of the rigging, the graceful bow with its imposing figurehead and the massive yet ornamental stern, constituted a fine general effect, far more pleasing to the eye than the modern battleship, so emblematic of strength, one turret of which would, with the greatest of ease, blow the liner out of the water, 120 guns and all. One a symbol of nautical beauty, the other of menace.

It was impossible to explore the old ship without feeling that one was living in another generation. There was a sensation of being accompanied by the spirits of the brave fellows who had fought and fallen on her decks, almost as if they were regarding you with curious eyes responsive to your sympathy and resentful of undue gaiety. And who but the most callous could feel anything but serious and thoughtful when standing on the quarterdeck and silently contemplating the brass plate bearing an inscription 'Here Nelson fell,' or on descending to the cockpit and gazing with reverent eye at the beam which bore the inscription 'Here Nelson died'? The one and only thing that we can do for our glorious dead is to see that their memory is kept evergreen, and to pay silent homage to them whenever and wherever the opportunity is granted to us.

There was a large number of men on board; consequently a constant stream of activity, in which, however, we took little part. It was a great mistake to send youngsters to a guardship instead of allowing them to remain at home until appointed to a seagoing ship. As it was, we were not wanted and were often very much in the way.

We found ourselves in a gunroom with many others who were waiting for a ship, thus being pitchforked into a gathering of youths with no duties to perform and not a soul who appeared to have any interest in them. There were no Sub-Lieutenants and only one or two Senior Mids. The standing members of the mess were some Assistant-Paymasters who endeavoured to make us uncomfortable with a certain amount of success; there were a few Second-Masters also, but they were more human. A Second-Master was the next in rank to a Master, above whom was the Staff-Commander, the highest rank in the navigating line. Below the Second-Master were the Master's Assistants. All ranks wore corresponding uniform to the executive line (which was known as the Royal Line), with the addition of blue velvet between the gold stripes. There were a lot of fancy titles in the old Navy, but the present one has it beat to a frazzle. We began a few years back with Engineer Admirals, and we finish now with Paymaster Midshipmen! Why not be brave and drop the qualification? But there may be some enthusiasts who are not ashamed of the triumphs of surgery, or of steam, or even finance. It takes a good

man to handle a battleship's cash account. But what would some of our old seadogs have said about all these innovations? I will hazard an opinion that some of them would argue on the following lines: 'You have made a fusion of the uniform for all ranks, why not go the whole hog and have common entry? The pay department is probably the only one which would suffer for want of volunteers; many boys have a hankering for engineering, and some would be attracted by surgery, whereas no boy cares to quill-drive if he can do something else.'

The past centuries had left a legacy of unpopularity to the navigational duties of a warship. The Captain and most of his merry men were fighting men only, and there were mariners to work the vessel. It became better in time, but although not despised, was confined to the Master's branch, and after the necessary examinations had been passed we, as a rule, agreed to forget it. The introduction of the art in the executive line changed all that, and, in spite of the warnings of the croakers, the new men developed into some of the finest navigators that the world has ever known. Such is my experience, and it embraces both classes. Agitation, as usual, sprung up, with the result that the entry was stopped, Lieutenants were invited to qualify in navigation, and having done so, were distinguished by having the letter N placed after their names, given more pay, and, as a rule, the best billets. The old list is now eliminated and the navigation is much better than it ever was. Of course, every man is not a born navigator, but we have the best in the world and always will have. Are we not the salt of the sea? It is in the blood of our island race. British seamen have virtually charted the world of sea, and every nation uses our Admiralty charts.

To return to the gunroom. Among other frivolities we were made 'Servants of the Queen' by having the broad arrow slit on our noses. The subject was held down on a convenient table and the skin over the tip of his nose tautened. Then the point of a penknife was used to scratch the familiar token. Naturally a little blood flowed and the victim's face was freely smeared with it. We were then free of the Navy. It did not hurt much but was a bit of an eyesore (or shall we say nosesore?) for a few days until the disfiguring mark disappeared. In our case the indignity consisted in having the operation performed by the aforesaid Assistant-Paymasters.

The above practice came to an abrupt end a few years later. One of the cadets went home on leave wearing the Queen's mark. His father was an M.P. and made a considerable fuss in the House about the brutal treatment his hopeful had received. This was the first flutter of the anti-ragging campaign. However, this affair put a stop to the custom which, after all, was in keeping with the times and not more absurd than other practices indulged in by certain secret societies still in existence. We certainly live in an age of small reforms and neglect staring evils.

The Assistant-Paymasters exploited us in the matter of 'Extras'—supplementary dainties obtainable from the messman. Everyone was allowed to incur a certain amount of these as well as a limited wine bill, proportionate to rank. These (in our case) soon vanished, for these people had a habit of inviting us to gamble for an extra supper, or a bottle of beer, or glass of wine (in fact any other luxury that they stood in need of and was procurable) by a process by which we were (at first) victims. It was not the custom (then) to toss or throw dice, but to 'cut' in a book. You took a book, and after saying "Two two left" or "Two two right," or anything in that direction that you fancied, opened it at hazard. The second letter of the second line of the left page (or the right if named) was your letter. The other man then took the book and did the same, and if his letter was higher in the alphabet than yours he won, if lower, he lost; A being superior to B and so on. A very simple procedure, and easy as falling off a log. But it is obvious that it has to be straight work; for example, if the victim took the first cut, it was easy for the other to call something higher and shut the book up before there was time to verify it. This was the trick these professors worked on us, but we soon got wise to it and declined with thanks.

There being nothing for us to do, we could go on shore whenever we liked. Luckily the French Fleet came in on a visit and I was told off as midshipman of a cutter, my first command. Pride swelled my youthful bosom when I was sent out to Spithead to the *Solferino* with what I felt sure must be dispatches of a most important nature; probably they were invitations to a dinner and ball which had been arranged. The French officers were very kind to the little middy.

When I look back to those *Victory* days it appears incredible that the Admiralty should have permitted so many youngsters to be exposed to the pitfalls of such a place as Portsmouth then was, and as it continued to be for many years. We were exploited on board and on shore. When I overhauled my chest on leaving, I found several articles of my kit missing, and in addition my gold signet-ring, which I had stowed away in what I fondly imagined was a safe haven. The ship was manned by an ever-shifting population, and the sentries could not possibly distinguish one servant from another ; hence it was easy business for a bold thief to examine any chest in the steerage without being suspected. Of course, we should have locked them.

At length appointment arrived, and with two or three more appointed to the *Constance,* I started off for Plymouth, where she was lying ready for sea. We arrived the same evening and put up at Morshead's, Devonport, making arrangements to join the following morning.

My sojourn in the *Victory* taught me a lesson. As a Commander, when in port, I sent the youngsters home on leave as much as possible. Perhaps the parents were not always grateful! *Quien Sabe?*

CHAPTER IV

THE *CONSTANCE*

> She walks the waters like a thing of life,
> And seems to dare the elements to strife.
> Who would not brave the battle fire—the wreck—
> To move the monarch of her peopled deck?

AN old adage says, "A rose by any other name will smell as sweet." Granted as far as the perfume is concerned, but call the flower an onion and the association of the name immediately attacks its sentimental character. Give a ship an inappropriate name and she seems to lose her idiosyncrasy. Possibly those who name our warships bear this in mind. Most of them have suitable ones that at least you can associate with its office.

A ship is always spoken of in the feminine gender. Is it because objects so captivating to the eye can only be analogous to the fair sex? Yet it seems incongruous when applied to a *Bellerophon, Mars* or *Jupiter*: probably they were named long before we had a sufficiency of national heroes (especially naval ones) who were considered worthy of being honoured.

At an early period we began to produce such heroes rapidly. Nelson at once leaps into our thoughts, followed by Blake, Drake, Raleigh, Hawke and the fighting seamen of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, concluding with the Great War, in which many of the modern school proved themselves no whit inferior to their predecessors in courage, dash and ability.

But classic names were not always bestowed. For instance, *Redoubtable, Valiant* and *Dreadnought*. But what induced the Admiralty to name ships *James Watt* and *Owen Glendower*? And as if there were not enough naval victories to go round, *Barrosa, Blenheim, Ramillies* and, *mirabile dictu, Meeanee*! Watt developed steam, thereby revolutionizing the traffic of the world and

incidentally destroying the poetry of the sea, and Glendower was hardly more than a rebel. Shall we have a *de Valera*?

My point is that the name *Constance,* although not warlike, fitted our pretty frigate. Frigates usually had euphonious titles such as *Arethusa, Ariadne* or *Venus.* There has been a ship of the name in the service from a very early date. We find one in the sixteenth century, and in 1796 a *Constance* was captured from the French.

Was the original name selected by an uxorious Lord of the Admiralty who desired to honour a stately spouse? Or did he name a ship after a lovely daughter? We do not know, but the figurehead of our time was that of a captivating female with Grecian features, an imposing bust, and a wealth of hair. Further, we know that she was built in 1846 as a sailing ship, that in 1862 engines were put into her and she became what was generally termed an auxiliary screw.

The memory of events connected with one's first ship is usually more vivid than that of any other, and it is so in the case of the *Constance* with me. One of my most mournful recollections is watching the old craft *sans* masts, *sans* guns, being towed out of Plymouth in 1876, on a last voyage, to be broken up. Doubtless, as logs, she has warmed many a hearth.

She was a wooden frigate of 3,213 tons, 280 feet in length and 50 feet beam, and was built of good English oak, the only iron being the knees that supported the beams. She mounted thirty-five guns and carried a crew of 545. On the maindeck were twenty-six guns, of which fourteen were 8-inch smooth bore, and twelve were 7-inch shunt guns, all muzzle-loaders. On the quarter-deck were eight 40-pounder Armstrong, and on the fore-castle a 100-pounder Armstrong, all breech-loaders. The pounds represent the weight of the projectile. After the Armstrong had been loaded, a breech-block was dropped into a slot, which was then screwed up. When fired the breech-block has been known to blow out, and then followed an agonizing period of suspense as to where it would fall. The shunt guns were a peculiarity. They used an ogival-headed projectile with two sets of studs, the gun was grooved and the system depended on the large stud shunting on to the smaller groove. When the gun was fired the increased resistance gave the projectile a twist, and it travelled end on, striking with the pointed

end. The 8-inch guns fired round shot, the Armstrong's pointed ones coated with lead. All the projectiles could be fused for time or percussion ; we were also supplied with shrapnel and case shot.

At an examination, one of our mids was asked why guns were called shunt guns. After a moment's hesitation he replied, "After the maker's name." Laughter, in which the examiner joined !

In addition, we had boat guns, which could be used as field guns, and 250 rifles—Enfield muzzle-loaders—fitted with a sword bayonet, cutlasses, rocket tubes and *boarding pikes!* As a necessary corollary to the last two articles, we stowed two large sweeps on the booms for use in a calm during action. Regulations die hard in the Navy.

The horse-power of the engines was 500, coal stowage 200 tons, and full speed 11 knots ; but steam was an auxiliary and only used in case of need. The screw was a lifting one, and was hoisted up in what was termed a banjo frame. The engines were an experiment, compound with six cylinders, an innovation in those days, and it was expected that we would economize more fuel than our contemporaries, but to understand such things at that time was not considered necessary but rather derogatory to a deck officer. We mids were sometimes taken down into the engine-room and stokehold to learn to 'Reeve Steam,' as we called it, but we looked upon it as a waste of time.

It was the same with school, which the Naval Instructor held in the Captain's fore-cabin. We always tried to evade it by being on duty—any old excuse. When the Naval Instructor was absent and the Captain elsewhere we filled in the time by skylarking. One afternoon I was in the after cabin trying on the Captain's jacket and admiring the four stripes in front of a long glass, when in walked the Captain. Climax !

The system of education was too professional, for there was no attempt at giving us general information. The Naval Instructor confined himself to navigation and the Chaplain never troubled his head about us ; very wisely perhaps, for we were a set of unmitigated young scamps and would have resented any 'Bible drill,' as it was irreverently termed. Geography and Astronomy we could not help imbibing, but History was a sealed book except to the voluntary student. There was—for the times—a good

ship library, but it appeared to me that most of my messmates preferred fiction.

The *Constance* was a Symondite, i.e. built from the designs of Admiral Sir W. Symonds. Instead of having a flat bottom, she had a V-shaped one, the theory being that ships would sail better for it, which they did, but they rolled much more. Our craft once rolled the main-yardarm under water. Formerly a purely sailing ship, she had been docked, cut in two, and lengthened 50 feet. She was the only ship I ever served in rigged according to 'Cocker,' the only departure being that the lower rigging was wire instead of hemp, which gave her a lighter look aloft. Everything else was 'Shipshape and Bristol Fashion.' No strop and toggle work, no fakes, gilguys, or gadgets.

We used to have a good deal of drill, and at sea, after evening quarters, always took in reefs. Our heaviest drill was 'down lower yards and topmasts,' and then make 'plain sail.' In addition to the daily routine of sending down upper yards and masts in harbour, we had a weekly drill-morning. These drills kept the men healthy and made splendid fellows of them, and very smart aloft they were. Some of them never used the foot-ropes, but ran out on the yards, even at sea, when the rolling of the ship made it most hazardous. Sometimes this practice led to accidents, such as when a foretopman—one of the smartest men in the ship—jumped off the rigging on to the yard and went clean over it. It was in harbour; consequently the awnings were spread, and such a circumstance ought to have saved him, but unluckily he fell through an uncovered spot on to a small brass gun and was killed instantly. To our astonishment a Coroner and his jury came off to hold an inquest. He was a coloured gentleman and the jury a crowd of nondescripts. The Captain was furious, and had them all turned out of the ship. He was not going to have an inquest on board *his* ship.

In the tropics we turned out at daylight; cocoa was served out and the men fell in without their jumpers. Then with the first blush of a tropical morning, the bright stars overhead and a cool land-wind blowing, we drilled for an hour or so, then adjourned to a well-earned breakfast.

With other ships in company the drills were carried out by signal from the senior officer. The method of

communication was by flag or semaphore ; the signalmen were good and expert. For night work there was a systems of lanterns at yardarms and in various other positions. Then appeared Colomb's lantern with a system of long and short flashes, Morse coming in later. There was also an antiquated system of long-distance day signalling carried out by utilizing the upper sails.

Sometimes an incident occurred at drill which lent a touch of humour. For instance, while shortening sail the Commander hailed the topsail sheetman on the main-yard—the sheet had jammed. "What is the matter?" he inquired. The man was obviously doing his best and so probably resented being stirred up, and he muttered *sotto voce*, "Oh! shut up, you old fool!" But it was plainly heard on the quarterdeck, and every one looked apprehensively at the Commander to see how he would take it. He shook his fist at the man and exclaimed, "Why didn't you say so before?" The fact was he was rather deaf and had not caught what was said.

'Out boom boats' was another evolution. We carried two launches of twenty oars each, one on each side of the booms, and a fourteen-oared pinnace which stowed inside one of them, as did the other boats at sea, only the cutters being left at the davits as lifeboats. These davits were heavy wooden structures about twenty feet long, square, and cleated on the upper side. They were supported from the mizen mast by chains, and falls were rove through the extremities for hoisting the boats ; they could be topped back in heavy weather.

There were no steam boats in those days ; the *Royal Alfred*, that relieved the *Duncan*, had one and it was a great novelty, and we had met a French cruiser that had a weird-looking steam pinnace. The French were generally ahead of us in adopting promising inventions ; perhaps their Treasury—the stalking horse of the British Admiralty—had looser purse-strings.

The Captain's cabins were aft on the maindeck ; his accommodation was excellent. Outside, on the port side, was the Commander's cabin, and on the other side, and corresponding in size, was the ship's office. They all had gun ports, and in order not to destroy the symmetry of the broadside the ports were fitted with quakers—dummy wooden muzzles—fixed to the lower portlids. The cooks' galleys were on the same deck, just before the main-mast, and in the bow was the manger—a spaced area

round the hawse-holes—with a low breastwork to prevent the water from flowing aft. The riding bitts were just aft of the manager, and on each side were officers' lavatories. The manger played an important part in anchor operations. The anchor was weighed by means of an endless chain (known as a messenger), rove round rollers forward and the maindeck capstan aft. The messenger was lashed to the cable by means of nippers (prepared pieces of rope), and the maindeck capstan was on the same spindle as the upper-deck one, but could be disconnected ; therefore, when it was connected and the upper one manned, and hove round, it also revolved, and the messenger, being engaged to it by a sprocket wheel, travelled round it. Thus when the cable was lashed to the messenger it follows that it was hove in. All that remained to be done was to keep putting on nippers forward in the manger and taking them off aft at the naval pipe where the cable found its way to the lockers below. This operation was continued until the anchor was weighed and high enough to stow.

Aft on the lower deck was the wardroom with cabins ; it was roomy and well lit up by a large skylight. Outside was the steerage-in which were cabins for the Warrant Officers ; they comprised the boatswain, gunner and carpenter, all there were in those days. On the port side was the gunroom, while on the opposite side was the engineers' mess. Forward of these ran the lower deck, on which the men messed and slept, the Marines immediately aft, their quarters being called the barracks. The occupants of the wardroom were fifteen—the Commander, five Lieutenants, the Master, a Captain and Subaltern of Marines, the Chaplain, the Naval Instructor, a Surgeon, two Assistant-Surgeons and the Chief Engineer.

The gunroom contained 21 members—the Sub-Lieutenant, Assistant-Paymaster, 2 Clerks, 3 Master's Assistants and 14 Midshipmen—while the engineers' mess consisted of 9 members. The latter slept in hammocks outside their mess, and the gunroom took up the rest of the steerage in which their chests stood. A topman acted as hammockman, and a marine or bandsman as servant, both of whom had to be paid out of the scanty pay received after threepence per diem had been deducted as tuition allowance for the Naval Instructor, the Admiralty being thus generous at our expense.

A few words on the officers. Necessarily the Captain

comes first. He was a very reserved man and rarely spoke to any one ; when he did it was to the point, and he had a great command of strong epithets. A good seaman (of what was even then the old school), he was inclined to be severe but just. The Commander, who was his antithesis and known as the 'Lady Betty,' was very popular. Most forbearing with the young gentlemen—as midshipmen were called—many of us owed a debt of gratitude to him for that trait. With the assistance of the Lieutenants he ran the ship very creditably. The Lieutenants were of the best ; they made friends with us and we liked them all. The two senior ones had served in the Crimean War. One of them had lost an eye, and wore a glass one. Being rather particular, he owned several in order that he might match the condition of the other. We called them his fine and foul weather eyes. One of the duties of the midshipman of the watch was to call the officer of the next watch, and, until one got used to it, it was rather uncanny to call a man who literally slept with his eye open.

The Captain of Marines was *persona grata* with all of us. The Surgeon—a kind man—used to take us out with him on visits which we much appreciated. One of the Assistant-Surgeons was very eccentric ; he allowed some of us the free use of his cabin, and I am afraid we made hay in it pretty often. An unfortunate man had his foot taken off while tacking ship by stepping into the coil of the maintopbowline when the after yards were swung. A short time afterwards our friend was seen on the forecastle in the midst of a circle of admiring bluejackets dissecting the severed foot. Good old Jimmy lost no chances. At that time the Surgeons provided their own instruments and drugs. The sickbays were cheerless and cramped. Now things are very different, and most Surgeons are keen and able, and the sick are carefully attended to.

The Warrant Officers were thoroughly good representatives of their class, especially the boatswain. He was devoted to his duties and never left the ship more than two or three times during the commission. A good husband and father, 'Pipes' sent home all his pay. He did many a kind action to some of us who had chests outside his cabin, and used to look after our kits, mending and sewing and even washing for us. His service dated back to the bombardment of Acre, and he was a Crimean

man, of whom we had a large number among the crew. The remaining officers call for no particular notice.

All frigates were beautiful objects, and ours was a perfect picture whether under sail or in harbour with yards squared, ropes harpstring taut, and paint and brass-work shining. The bottom was coated with Muntz metal, and took a fine polish. The hammocks were laced up, and in fine weather, when the hammock cloths were furled, lent an additional air of swank to the ship. In those days there was no standard colour scheme ; our funnel was whitewashed, but except when required for steaming, was always kept housed. The masts were dark spruce colour and the yards black ; this effect was rather heavy, but served to show off the sails when furled. The hull was black with a broad white stripe the depth of the gunports running right round her, and another one of less depth beneath the hammock nettings ; this was called the boot-top. Perhaps the crowning beauty was the figurehead, the bust of a very pretty woman wearing a coronet. With the exception of the coronet, which was gilt, the figurehead was white. Figureheads are gone with some of the romance of the Service, and the art of carving them is a lost one. That is how we saw her when (having arrived at Plymouth and taken a boat to the Sound) she came in view. The wily boatman charged us a most unconscionable sum, which in our ignorance we paid.

Arrived on board, we were cordially received by the old hands, who calculated upon a certain easement of their duties, but they were a good lot, and during the next three years of the commission we were a happy crowd. Not that we were pampered ; justice had to be administered at times. It sometimes took the form of a cobbing, i.e. a thrashing with a dirk scabbard. Half a dozen strokes on the delinquent's seat was a goodly incentive to sin no more. The formalities of a court martial were always observed ; it was held by the three seniors, and in my opinion the punishment was never unduly awarded.

We found the gunroom to be an oblong enclosure of about thirty feet by ten, the height between decks being about seven feet. Lockers were fixed round the sides and served as seats. In these lockers we kept private gear. A table ran the whole length of the gunroom, and the space underneath was boarded in. It was called the jollyboat, and was used for mess stores. The bulkheads were jalousied and light was afforded in the daytime by

scuttles fitted with bull's-eyes for screwing in at sea. At night hanging lights were lit. Shelves were fitted round the bulkheads, and contained a miscellaneous collection of dirks, sextants and other paraphernalia. Somewhat different from the comparatively palatial gunroom of modern times that often contains a piano. The mention of hanging lamps introduces the method of lighting the ship. It was very poor. There were big police lights at certain selected positions that burned large bore candles, pushed up by a strong spring. The lamps were glass on three sides, and a powerful reflector on the fourth increased their brilliancy. There were also hand lanterns that burned tallow candles known as Purser's dips, and there were battle lanterns for night action. The officers supplied their own cabin lights, as usual, at their own expense. Every precaution was taken against fire, that in a wooden ship with only hand pumps would have been a serious affair. At night, rounds were gone every half-hour, and the Executive Officer reported all lights and fires out after he had gone the grand round at nine o'clock. Only police lights and others for which permission had been given could be used after that hour. The bowlights burned oil, and at times were very troublesome. All lights were under the supervision of a lamp-trimmer or 'lampy.' Colomb lights were a vast improvement, but oh! the joy of electricity!

The smoking regulations were very rigid. The men were only allowed to smoke during meal hours on one side of the maindeck; after supper they could smoke until 8.30; they smoked pipes (cigarettes were unknown), and the pipe was usually kept in the man's cap. Matches were tabu, and it was a very serious offence to be in possession of them. The officers smoked between two guns aft on the maindeck, never in the mess. Contrast this with the smoking-room of a modern ship.

Smoking out of the ship when in uniform was forbidden, and in plain clothes was considered bad form. I must confess that it still has that impression on me. Smoking was not by any means so universal in those days. Many officers called it a disgusting habit, notably the first two Captains under whom I served. We seem to have veered to the other extreme now. At that time the Spaniard was despised for his eternal cigarette smoking. To further illustrate old customs. If found with your hands in your pockets by the Commander it led to their

being sewn up. There is a fatal facility in acquiring this habit ; my preventive was always to wear gloves, and now in my old age when I fall to it, I find myself looking round apprehensively to see if the Commander is about.

But to return to the gunroom. The seniors comprised a Sub-Lieutenant and five three-yearly Midshipmen ; the rest of us were youngsters. We were particularly fortunate in the Sub. He was an allround athlete, boxer, cricketer and gymnast ; he took us in hand and we owed a great deal to him.

The type of officer was outwardly very much the same as at present ; most of us were clean shaved. It was before the days when Childers, First Lord of the Admiralty, introduced beards and moustaches. Regulation decreed that three fingers in breadth of the chin must be shaved and no moustache worn. This left the ground clear for certain whimsies in whiskers, and what were known as ' Piccadilly Weepers ' were popular with certain dandies. I think they were better known as ' Dundreary Whiskers,' having been popularized by Sothern by his impersonation of that character. It disappeared when beards came in and the ' torpedo cut ' became the vogue. For my part I am not enamoured of too much face-fungus ; a clean shave makes a man look smarter—even if he isn't—and my boat's crew had to shave always.

I used the word *outwardly* in connection with the type of officer, yet professionally there seems a subtle difference between the naval officer of those days and the present. It is probably because they are more scientific than formerly. So many more qualifications are demanded of them ; at the same time there are more directions in which they can turn their aspirations. Gunnery was the only line in which an officer could specialize, then came navigation and torpedo. Now, if a young officer is ambitious, he can get a destroyer—a splendid field of training—or a submarine, or, if his inclinations lie that way, he can qualify in engineering, physical training or signalling, and finally there is staff work, for which most certainly brains should be a *sine qua non*. There is no longer any excuse for a man remaining a ' Salt-Horse ' lieutenant.

But apart from this professional divergence the old and the new class are still fundamentally and characteristically alike—each typical of good comradeship and mutual regard. A man had to go to extreme lengths

before becoming an outcast to his brother officers in the Navy. The great majority are generous, sympathetic and unselfish. As a body I believe they are one of the most hospitable in the world; their love for children and animals is well known. Last, but not least, a student of divorce returns will tell you that the smallest percentage of divorces occurs among sailors and their wives. Ladies, take note.

As it may be thought that I am unduly biased by partiality, I will present the other side of the platter. Human nature is much the same all over the world, and the naval officer is no exception to the rule. It must be admitted that in my time there was a good deal of drinking and, to a certain extent, gambling. Both are now, happily, unfashionable. There was very hard swearing too, but sailors had not the sole prerogative of that. The *argot* of the Service has undergone a change. It is, and always has been, the language of the trade, and is thus adapted to the conditions of the times. Such phrases as 'Short Circuit,' or 'Hot Air' would have been as unintelligible to the old school as 'Top your Boom' and 'Sway the Main' are probably to the modern one.

But that great asset the Spirit of the Navy remains the same, and in common with many another old fossil I recognize that it is not dead, but very much alive. Of all glorious episodes that of the *Broke* and the *Swift* proved it up to the hilt.

Apropos of nautical terms, I wonder how many civilians are aware that they frequently use them, probably without any comprehension of their true significance. Take the expression 'Flat-a-back,' one of the most critical positions in which a seaman could find himself.

If he wants to be jocular he assumes an attitude and cries 'Once on board the Lugger' or 'Throw the Main-deck Overboard,' or some equally idiotic phrase. Again, the sailor is supposed to be always saying 'Avast' or 'Belay,' terms which he never uses in ordinary conversation or on the stage. Lately, in fiction, he seems to have adopted such expressions as 'Old Top,' 'Old Bean' and 'Old Thing,' all of which he seems to share with the new soldier, who has metamorphosed the old greeting of 'What Cheer' into 'Cheerio.' I doubt whether they are much used in wardroom or gunroom.

The ship's company was a very good one, the great majority being West-Countrymen, men of Devon, true sons

of the sea, although the grand old county has given freely to the sister Service. The ship seemed permeated by the Devonshire dialect, and the small minority of East-Countrymen used to subject the westerners to a good deal of mild chaff. "How about the monkey that the Plymothians hung for a French spy?" and "What about the wall they built at Staddon to keep the fever out?" One of the mids was from Devon, and could troll out some of its typical ditties. A deputation from another ship asked their Captain to try and get "That theer wastcoontry laad appointed to theer ship, as they had taken a rare likin' to Him," but we were not parting with him. Of course, to a boy they seemed much older than was actually the case, but I know they were a very fine lot. They were not educated; a very large proportion could not read or write, only a very few possessed the latter accomplishment. The oldest were on the forecastle, the smartest in the fore and maintops, and the youngest in the mizentop; they were known as 'Lambies.'

Then came the gunners, staid men under the gunner, the afterguard, comprising a few old seamen and the idlers, who were stewards, servants, the butcher, baker, tailor, barber, blacksmith *et hoc genus omne*. Although how an idler could ever exist on board a warship passeth understanding. The term 'afterguard' came to be used as a term of reproach, which finally led to the title being abolished, 'daymen' being substituted for it, but it did not seem to fit quite well; however, it may be assumed that the feelings of the sensitives were assuaged.

Next were the carpenters and sailmakers, very important branches in the oldtimers, then the stokers, and lastly the band. We had a very good band of twenty-one performers. Nearly all of them, including the bandmaster, were Germans. The latter could not speak English properly, and his instructions to the band were very amusing. To an offender he would say, "I did tell you to blay la-la and you did blay pom-pom." Then he would snatch the instrument out of a man's hands and execute a brilliant cadenza or a staccato movement—he was an excellent musician—in order to show him how it should be done. "Dat is vot you should blay; so she should go." The big drummer appeared before the Commander one day. "My fader is dead, Sir." "I am sorry to hear it," was the reply. "But I am now a Baron." "Well," said the Commander, "you may be

a Baron, but you will continue to beat the big drum as long as you are in this ship." And he did.

We used to land the band to play in some of the islands where they had none, and the performances were much appreciated. But although the men returned sober and were all searched before being dismissed, many of them got drunk afterwards. At last the Master-at-Arms had a happy thought. He examined the instruments and found that the euphonium was plugged up and full of rum. Once the General Officer Commanding was passing in a steamer and the guard and band were paraded to do him honour. The bandmaster inquired of the officer of the watch what air he was to play, and the latter jocularly replied, "The Rogues' March." The stolid German had actually commenced the first bars of the air before the horrified officer could stop him. He had not expected to be taken *au pied de la lettre*. The band had no authorized uniform. It was designed by a committee of officers, and the result was not always happy, sometimes even startling. They were all short-service men and enlisted for the commission. It is said that one ship enlisted an entire German band off the streets. Bandsmen are now drawn—like stores—from the naval school of music at Eastney, where they receive a thoroughly good training. They wear the uniform of the Marines with a bandsman's insignia. A capital system and a really good reform.

Last, but not least, were the Joeys or Leathernecks, the Royal Marines—as usual, a fine company of men who furnished the sentries. In harbour there was always a sentry on the knightheads and on each gangway (the latter in dickeys or small platforms outside the ship); their beats were somewhat circumscribed. These sentries went on fully accoutred, and had standing orders to unfix bayonets when anyone went aloft. The other sentries were in fatigue dress. May the day never dawn which will witness their abolition, although there is not the need for them that there was. A bluejacket once said to a Marine in my hearing, "What are the Marines for on board ship?" "To keep the officers and men from skoffing each other," was the ready reply. It was not true in those days, still less now, but let us hang on to the Joeys as long as we can.

The detachment brought buglers. The Navy trained none in those days. Bugling was not so universal as it

is now. We were called to quarters by the drum—the roll and the beat, according to whether 'Action,' 'Exercise' or 'Clean Guns' was intended. 'Sticks' (there were two of them), and the ship's drummer—who was also the barber, and made a good thing out of it—performed at different posts, and then assembling played patriotic airs while the men were cleaning guns, the buglers using their fifes, and all three parading the maindeck. Such airs as 'Hearts of Oak,' 'Trafalgar Bay' and 'The Girl I left behind Me' were favourites. There is something very inspiring in the roll of the drum; it is more typical of war's alarums than the bugle. The buglers had not very heavy duties; they sounded 'Rouse Out,' or 'Revelly,' as it is generally called, 'Sunset,' 'Out Lights' and 'Last Post.' The boatswain's mates piped the rest. The pipe calls were many, and to the trained ear of the seaman quite distinct. Have they vanished with the drums? How important one felt on being 'piped over the side.'

The Marines were clothed in uniform of little round porkpie caps and short fatigue jackets buttoned up to the chin, trousers as now. A tunic was worn on dress occasions, the head-dress being the old shako, and they carried a knapsack with a whole saddler's shop of straps to boot. The officers wore green feathers on the shako, and on some occasions a frockcoat with a red sash. With the little cap then in vogue they looked rather Frenchie. The Marines were a beefy crowd, and always took the outside places on the capstan bars. The officer of Marines had not enough to do. I remember at Quebec the Captain of Marines asking the Commander for leave; the Captain was away at the time. "Oh yes," said the Commander, engrossed with his job. "As long as you like." The wily Captain went away for a fortnight on the strength of that answer. There was a bit of a sheavo when he returned.

Our internal economy was good. Punishments were much the same as they were until a recent date, but sometimes an officer would inflict what was strictly speaking an illegal one in the direction of making the punishment fit the crime. For example, a man spitting on the deck would have to scrub it up and any other stains until he could catch another offender, then he handed the post over to him. Men caught scrubbing clothes in improper hours or places walked the lee-gangway with the

article suspended from an oar until it was dry. Another who let go the wrong rope carried the coil for an hour or so. A man dozing on the lookout would get a bucket of water over him, and a dirty man (very rare) or a dirty boy (not so rare) was scrubbed unmercifully by his messmates. The final resource was a flogging, known as 'Four Bag.' Why I know not. It certainly was four dozen on the back. Was the bag a corruption of back? When the punishment was accompanied by discharge it was called 'Four Bag and a Blanker.' The Blanker was his certificate, which was returned with the corner cut off. The *Constance* was the only ship in which I witnessed these punishments—about half a dozen.

The procedure was very imposing. The entire ship's company was present ; Marines under arms on the quarter-deck, and all the officers attended wearing side-arms. The whole a silent reminder of force, and calculated to inspire awe. Capstan bars were lashed to the Jacob's ladder of the main rigging and to a grating on the deck. The boatswain attended with four of his mates. When all was ready, amid an expectant hush, the culprit was marched aft by the Master-at-Arms. The Captain then made his appearance attended by his clerk, who handed him the warrant for punishment, which he proceeded to read, usually adding a short homily.

At the word "Strip" the man pulled off his jumper and flannel, thus exposing his bare back ; the Master-at-Arms and his satellites then seized his wrists and ankles to the capstan bars. The surgeon, having previously examined the man, stood close by. The Captain then gave the order, "Boatswain's mates, do your Duty!" and the operation was carried through, each administering a dozen lashes in rotation, the Master-at-Arms calling aloud each lash. At the termination he reported "Forty-eight lashes," and the Captain gave the order, "Cast off" ; this was quickly done, the man's flannel was thrown across his back and he was conducted to the sickbay, where he remained until reported fit for duty.

It was not an elevating spectacle, neither was it humanizing. The first few strokes marked the back with red wales, but after a time all these merged into one bleeding discoloration. It must have been a very painful ordeal, although it was said that after several strokes the man did not feel much. I have my doubts. But a flogging had one advantage : it gave the man a

fresh start, and nobody thought any the worse of him, providing it was not a criminal offence, in which case he usually got a blanker too. It was better than having to send him to prison, thereby making a jailbird of him, as well as an object of contempt to his shipmates. Some of the best men in the ship had had their four bag, notably the sergeant-major of Marines, a fine specimen of a man who would have been ruined probably by prison life.

The cat was fitted with a handle of wood and a tail of nine whipcords, and must have been a punishing instrument. In the case of theft, each tail had an overhand knot in it. I only saw this administered on one occasion to a sentry on the cockpit who helped himself to a basin of sugar where stores were issued. It was a serious offence, still the punishment was a bit tough, but he bore it without a groan. It was a point of honour to do so, and if any man had disgraced himself and his mess by whining he would have got a cobbing.

As I have said, I witnessed half a dozen floggings, and only once did a man conduct himself pusillanimously, and his behaviour was almost comic. He was a bad character and richly deserved his fate. It seemed as if the boatswain's mates liked flogging him. At least it appeared so when the first man began laying on what may be described as fancy strokes. The sufferer would give a wriggle and ejaculate, "That's my bloody Liver," then "That's my bloody Lights." At last he shouted, "Hit fair, you Swine." At this point the Captain interfered and ordered the operator to flog him fairly. There was a tradition that a man was not responsible for what he said while he was being flogged, but it was not borne out by my experience. A Marine was being flogged, and after a few strokes he turned his head and said, "This is your fault, you ——." After another stroke or two he called out, "I've got to thank *you* for this." It was not apparent who he was addressing, and an uneasy feeling prevailed. The Captain settled it by stopping the flogging and saying, "Now, my man, you know me. Any more remarks and up you go again in twenty-four hours for another four dozen." The man suffered the remainder of his punishment like a stoic. Poor fellow, he was one of the hardest working men in the ship, but had been guilty of insubordination to one of the non-commissioned officers, for whom doubtless his remarks were intended.

Boys were punished with the birch, administered in the same way as described previously, except that a quarter-deck gun took the place of a table. Fifteen strokes were the limit. A boy under punishment sang out at the conclusion, "Domino." "What did he say?" asked the Commander. He was informed. "Ah, give him three more on his 'domino,'" and three more were duly administered to the disconcertion of the culprit. But the expression was traditionally used at the conclusion of a flogging, and boys will ape the man.

And now for the uniform. The Navy is a very conservative Service, and alterations are regarded with suspicion. At that time we had no white tunic; its advent was a real boon. To maintain the balance there was no greatcoat, which came later as the result of the Duke of Edinburgh's committee at the close of the last century, and is a copy of the Russian greatcoat. The Duke was an Admiral in that Navy. The committee suggested several other reforms, notably an improvement in the full dress. But the Queen would have none of them. About that time an undress blue tunic was added to our already comprehensive kit. It was single breasted with a hook-up collar, and a more vulgar-looking article of wear could not have been designed. But the best reform of all was numbering the rigs. The landsman would be astonished at their diversity. Also regulations as to boots, shoes, gloves, neckties and caps were formulated with advantage.

The signal for the dress to be worn is now made by number, and there is no chance of a contretemps occurring, such as being ordered to withdraw by the Flag-Lieutenant (sent by the Admiral), for being improperly dressed, as happened to myself and another officer at the palace ball at Malta some years ago. But we were in tailcoats and epaulettes, while the others were in jackets, which was *not* uniform out of the ship at that time. But the Commander-in-Chief liked it. Some of the kit might be abolished with advantage to the pocket of the officer, but it is to be hoped that the gold-laced trousers will be retained. The Navy is the only British Service which has them.

The men of those days made their own clothes, and if a man was not an adept there was always some comrade who would undertake it for him—of course, at a fixed charge. Many of them added considerably to their pay by this practice. On Thursdays (a day known as rope-

yarn Sunday) the afternoon was devoted to 'Make and Mend Clothes.' The men brought out their bags and set to work cutting out and making up their kits. Their work was extraordinarily neat, and most of them could compare favourably with any professional seamstress. Machines came in later, and are very popular. In the West Indies these men even made their own hats. The kits were inspected at stated times by the officers of divisions. But one article was sacred, namely, the ditty box in which the man kept his private belongings, and it was always kept unlocked with implicit confidence in its sanctity. If there was anything odious to the men it was theft ; everyone's hand was against a thief, and no pains were spared to run one to earth. Theft was rare.

As a result the men made a good appearance ; their uniforms fitted and looked smart. Now that the kit is issued, it is a different matter. Sizes never look well, and always require alteration. But it was hard on the men of former days to have to pay for their uniforms. If there was anything hateful to an officer of a division it was to have to order a man to get a new frock, or any other article of his uniform, should the one he was wearing be too shabby. It made a big hole in his pay. The cloth tunic was an anachronism (as is the officer's full dress), and a sigh of relief went up when it was abolished ; the same applies to the tarpaulin hat. I imagine that the epithet 'Tar' (the fancy name of the British Public for the bluejacket), was derived from that hat. In the Navy the men are B.B.'s. (British Blues), Flatfoots or Mateloes, the last presumably from Matelot, and the officers are N.O.'s, for Naval Officers. The sobriquet of the Marine, that of Leatherneck, is derived from the stock they used to wear. But I must not stray into naval nicknames ; it would be a lengthy business, for every department and every official is known off service by some peculiar term, generally derived from the function performed or the functionary himself.

Issues of tobacco were made in leaf at one shilling a pound. The bluejacket prepared it by shredding it of all stalks ; it was then slightly damped (the connoisseur added a little rum), done up in a canvas roll, and the operation completed by tightly laying it up with spun-yarn into a cylindrical shape, tapering at each end. It was then known as ship's or pricked tobacco. But it was strong!

The men were excellent laundrymen. Sometimes the whole ship's company seemed to be occupied in 'rubbing out a piece,' as they called it. Jack is a clean being, but how they managed to accomplish so much with such a limited amount of water was a wonder. Those were days when very little condensing was done, and we watered ship whenever practicable ; the launches were fitted for it with canvas tanks, but we were able to water from sailing tanks at Port Royal, formerly captured slavers, the largest with the appropriate name of *Father Mathew*.

As regards the food, the modern bluejacket would turn up his nose at the diet on which his predecessors thrived. In harbour fresh meat, vegetables and soft bread ; at sea, pea soup, salt beef or pork, the second known as salt horse, the last as dog's body. Flour and raisins were issued and a pudding made, known as duff. Cocoa was issued in the morning ; it was pure and unadulterated, with a thick skimming of rich oil. This, with biscuit (hard tack), often swarming with weevils, constituted breakfast. For tea or supper, as was the Service name for it, tea and the same hard tack with fragments left over from dinner. About this time a ration of preserved meat was issued. It made its appearance at the same time that an unfortunate woman was murdered by a miscreant who endeavoured to dispose of his victim's remains in tins. The new ration came to be known by the woman's name—Fanny Adams. The Admiralty's fancy name for it was preserved mutton. The jollyboat—known as the bloodboat—performed commissariat work, and the men of the boat came in for 'Cumshaw,' such as kidneys or other choice morsels. Of course, in the tropics fruit was plentiful and cheap ; for a small sum one could buy a large number of oranges, bananas, pineapples, melons, grape fruit, or limes.

A good regulation provided that the officer of the watch should taste the men's cocoa and soup, a sample of which was brought to him on the quarterdeck. On drill mornings extra cocoa was issued, made from soluble cocoa ; it was called 'optional' (officially), for it was optional with the Captain whether it should be issued, and 'hurry up' (unofficially). Rum was issued at noon, each man getting his tot, or half-gill : it was of the best. It was mixed in a large tub and diluted with three parts of water, thus becoming 'grog,' the nickname of Admiral Vernon of Portobello fame, who was responsible for the

custom which he introduced in 1745. The sobriquet was given him on account of his grogram breeches. Defaulters had a double allowance of water, and had to drink it on the quarterdeck. They generally showed their appreciation of it by pouring it down the nearest scupper. The negro boatmen were quite aware of this habit, and used to haul alongside and catch the fluid in basins as it trickled out.

Grog was issued by the ship's steward, sergeant-major and captain-of-the-hold, and these worthies were entitled to any surplus or 'plush,' as it was called. When a goodly number of men have to be provided for, it will be understood that a thumb inserted into a half-pint measure each time it is used will produce much plush.

The tea was always rank and strong, and sweetened regardless of individual taste. It was boiled in the same copper that the soup had been made in, and stewed for a long time: it nearly blew the roof of one's head off. There was an unpalatable species of preserved milk, a powder which never could have emanated from a cow in its right mind. Altogether it was a poor diet, and yet the men were splendid specimens of the human race, chiefly the result of a well-regulated life, plenty of fresh air and lots of exercise. There were no canteens.

The officers were allowed to draw the rum ration neat. Thanks to an officious Member of Parliament, and a complaisant Admiralty, this ration was stopped. Here we have the first mutterings of the prohibition storm.

And now let us get back to the gunroom. We soon learned that the ship was destined for the West Indies to relieve the *Shannon,* and that we were to start shortly for Madeira in company with the *Octavia* and *Arethusa,* making a steam trial on the way. We very soon discovered that we must not wear uniform on shore, so provided ourselves with mufti and swaggered about like little men to places of amusement, including billiard-rooms, which were more fashionable than they are now. Those were not the days of golf and lawn tennis. Croquet did not attract boys, cricket was an uncertain quantity, football still more so, and racquets a game for the few. The theatre was always there, and possessed a stock company that seemed to be able to produce an unlimited repertoire, but it was not for us, as youngsters were not allowed on shore after sunset. When we arrived on our station, we organized quite a respectable cricket team,

but the form of sport that appeals to most naval officers is shooting, and on some stations he gets plenty of it, rough, but real sport. There was not much in the West Indies ; later on, in the Bahamas, I got some good duck and snipe shooting. The men were not well off for amusements, but every ship had a racing boat ; we had one which pursued an uninterrupted course of victory. When we left Halifax to pay off we flew the cock at the masthead as champion of the station. Boxing had not become popular yet.

Our brief stay at Plymouth was a pleasant one, but we were none of us sorry when we started for Madeira. The *Octavia* was soon lost sight of, but the *Arethusa*—saucy as usual—kept ahead of us for three days. Then we got some bad weather and lost sight of her, and on sighting Funchal Bay, found an empty anchorage. We had won ! She came in twenty-four hours later and the *Octavia* forty-eight hours, so the ship did not disgrace herself. We revelled in our first visit to a foreign port, and hired horses to ride into the country ; the animals were not exactly the fiery, untamed class, but we got them to go. Another source of enjoyment was tobogganing down a paved road from the top of a hill outside the town. Then, Westward Ho, and we stood out of the bay under sail bidding adieux to the others. We never saw them again.

A few days after, a long consultation took place between the Captain, Commander and Chief Engineer. Something was up, and we were not left in doubt very long ; there had been a mishap in the engine-room, and as we had not arrived on our station it had been decided to put back. Accordingly we wore round and headed to the N.E. Our disappointment can be imagined—in spite of England, Home and Beauty. In a day or two we picked up a strong westerly wind which blew up into a furious gale until we were snugged down to a reefed foresail and close-reefed maintopsail, reeling off fourteen and sometimes fifteen knots ; a dozen men at the wheel. Our best run was 336 knots in twenty-four hours, or an average of fourteen knots an hour ; the old barky fairly hummed through it. In those days sailing ships were plentiful on the high seas (they had not been ousted by dirty little tramps), and we passed dozens of them lying to, under the smallest rag of a sail.

How their people must have admired the frigate as

we stormed past! With what envy have gazed at the big ship as she drove imperiously through the heavy sea, a marked contrast to their own vessel, wallowing and tossing, the sport of the waves.

Sheets of water surged off her bows as she thrust into it, the spray smothering the knightheads and reaching half-way to the foretop. At times she would give a terrifying pitch, submerging her bow and flinging up her stern until it appeared as if she was taking a header, at the same time rolling toward the onlookers until the hammock nettings were almost under water and the whole of the upper deck was visible. A pause, a shuddering recovery, and then with an upward scend and a contrary roll, she rose like a scuttering gull about to take a flight off the crest of a wave, until half the glistening bottom was disclosed. But we had lucid intervals and it must not be imagined that our progress was always so restless. During one of these paroxysms the main-yardarm went under the water three times in succession. Some roll!

Thus we scudded before the gale until it began to take off; it blew itself out and we made sail again, cracked on, and before very long had run our distance and no sign of land. Apparently the Master was a little bit fogged. We were under all sail and it was evident that we were nearing civilization, for there were fishing boats in sight. Happy thought, why not hail one? We stood toward the nearest and the officer of the watch asked our position. "Why, there is the Eddystone!" came back in stentorian tones, the speaker pointing to the northward. Sure enough, there it was, although by way of apology it must be said it looked like a fishing boat. Course was promptly altered, but what the fishermen thought of such an inquiry from one of Her Majesty's Ships must be left to imagination. What the Captain thought was loudly and publicly expressed, and when we next sailed it was with a new Master.

We anchored in the Sound and shortly proceeded up harbour, went alongside the yard, and the crew turned over to the *Vengeance,* an old two-decker used as a hulk and embedded in the mud at the north wall of Keyham yard, and the ship was taken in hand to be made good.

Our experience in the *Vengeance* is unforgettable. Leaky and drafty with shocking sanitary arrangements, she was anything but attar of roses. From the billet she

occupied the extension of the dockyard began later, and many acres of land were reclaimed for that purpose ; fine docks and storehouses were constructed with capital barracks, including all the necessary adjuncts. The barracks came a little too late for us. Years after, when serving the *Indus,* this part was still waste land, and I can recall badgers being caught on the very spot where the barracks now stand.

Every one that could do so, went on leave, the Chaplain among them. In his absence it is the duty of the Commanding Officer to perform divine service. Sunday arrived, and the Captain and Commander being away it devolved on one of the Lieutenants. The experience was a novel one. He got as far as the opening lines of the Lord's Prayer without any response from the men ; this was not satisfactory, and he suddenly broke off and exclaimed, "Damn it, men, why don't you respond?" Immediately, like a pack of hounds, they all gave tongue and the rest of the brief service went with a swing.

The ship was soon ready again and we turned over with great relief, moved out into the Sound, repeated our adieux and started for Madeira once more.

During this stay in the Sound the great gale of 1865 occurred. We rode it out under the lee of the breakwater with lower yards and topmasts struck. Thanks to the protection afforded, there was no sea, but the force and fury of the wind and the noise it made in the rigging was appalling. Three merchant ships were blown on shore, one under Staddon Heights, one on the Catwater, and the third on the Hoe.

We arrived at Madeira and it seemed as if we had only just left ; a brief stay, and we were off again, and soon picked up the trades. What a glorious experience was sailing in the trades ! Day after day with every stitch of canvas set, the screw up and the funnel housed, running down out Westing and bowling along ten knots or more an hour. At night a subdivision of topmen stationed aloft to whip in the royals and topgallant studdingsails if a squall should strike us. And the gorgeous tropical nights, softened and cooled by the steady breeze. The stars appeared to sparkle with additional lustre, and there seemed to be more of them. The moon shone with increased brilliancy, bathing the decks with its light, while over all lay a delicate tracery

of shadowy ropes, mast and yards. The ship slipped along with a scarcely perceptible motion, a gentle sea swishing and slapping along the sides. A covered light shows dimly, a few men on duty steal about silently, and others stand like ghostly figures ; a hush lies over all. We muse and dream, suddenly a bell strikes the hour, followed by the half-plaintive voices of the men on the lookout, as they call their posts, and we are awakened from our reverie.

Generally in the evenings at sea, and very often in harbour, the men sang ; we had quite a melodious crowd and some of the songs were excellently rendered. It was before the days of music-hall ditties, and many of the favourite ones were written by Dibdin, the sailor's poet. Some of the men, who came from Greenwich School, sang glees, but Jack was sentimentally inclined and the songs that appealed to him most were of that class, of Mother and Home—both two very good subjects. In harbour, with other ships present, a regular concert would often take place, each ship giving a turn in rotation, the ditty rendered receiving as much applause as the audience considered it merited, and they were impartial critics. The effect on a fine, still night was most pleasing.

Sometimes in harbour the hands were piped to ' dance and skylark.' Then—if in the mood—the men would dance and play games such as Sling the Monkey, Baste the Bear or Able Whackets. A favourite one was Follow the Leader, when all sorts of pranks were indulged in, and some daring feats performed. Once they began diving off the flying boom, but that had to be stopped. Sharks are always a possibility, and nothing is so hateful to a seaman. There was a legend at Port Royal of one monster called ' Port Royal Tom,' that was encouraged in the harbour to prevent men attempting desertion by swimming on shore.

During this passage we had our first experience of Christmas Day. After morning service the ship was put under easy canvas. At noon the Captain and Officers went round the messes, at each of which stood the cook of the mess with a plate full of delicacies of which one was invited to partake ; at the conclusion the hands were piped to dinner. The messes were profusely decorated, chiefly with paper designs, skilfully carried out, the general effect being very pleasing. Mottoes

were very much in evidence and the men devoted much time and not a little money to this work.

After dinner a sort of license to 'Go as you Please' was tacitly conceded to the ship's company, and some very uproarious scenes took place. The men were addicted to coming aft and chairing popular officers, and a great deal went on which was subversive to discipline. With lights out, and pipe down, the watch made sail again and peace and quiet prevailed.

A few days afterwards the Barbadoes was sighted; it was our first view of a tropical island. As we ran along the coast we viewed many fine sugar estates that showed up to advantage. Rounding the point, we anchored in Carlisle Bay. At that time the bay used to be full of shipping, often among it several whalers. A whale with two boats fast to it once came into the bay, took a course round the ship, and stood out to sea again; it went at a good rate and was a most interesting sight. The men sat down in the boats, which were being towed too fast for them to haul up. One felt that the job was a cruel one.

Barbadoes is the only West Indian Island which is not beautiful, but it makes up for it by patriotism. When the American Colonies revolted the islanders sent a message to King George III to come out to them and they would take care of him. Hither a number of Highlanders emigrated from Scotland, and their descendants are there to this day. They have intermarried and have deteriorated from that cause and climatic reasons. They are known locally as 'Whitelegs.' The 'Badian' has a great opinion of himself, and one of his sayings runs 'Barbadoes for manners and Antigua for Learning.' N.B.—Antigua possesses a college. Bridgetown, the capital, is chiefly remarkable for a statue of Nelson, which one morning was found to be painted green. There was a warship in the bay at the time.

On arrival we found orders to push on to Jamaica, where a rebellion had broken out; so off we went and carried the trade wind right into Port Royal Harbour, which we entered with a flourish that was badly discounted by the hawser carrying away before we had time to shackle on to the buoy. We had to drop the killick, and the entrée was destroyed.

The island was under martial law and the *Duncan*, a fine two-decker of eighty-one guns, was lying in

Kingston Harbour off the capital town of that name. She was the flagship and one of the last of the class. The last was, I believe, the *Rodney*, a sister ship and flagship in China; she paid off in 1868 and waited at Spithead for several days for a fair wind in order to sail into harbour, but Boreas would not oblige and she had to use steam. The *Victoria*, a three-decker of 102 guns, was also one of the last, and served as flagship in the Mediterranean, paying off in 1867. I have already attempted to describe these fine-looking ships. The *Duncan* was no exception and was the twin representation of beauty and force—as then known. Ironclads were coming in and the *Caledonia* was in the Mediterranean. The *Duncan* could sail well going free, but not so well on a wind, and there was a handsome little ship-rigged sloop, the *Fawn*, on the station which gave her a good beating.

The Admiral had had enough of Jamaica and the rebellion, so handed over matters to the Commodore who lived in the dockyard at Port Royal; he then left for Bermuda and Halifax. At both places a beneficent Admiralty provides residences for the Commander-in-Chief.

The rebellion—these were the last few days of 1865—was still simmering in spite of firm measures taken by the Governor, who by his promptness saved the situation and wrecked his own career. A High Commissioner had been sent out from home to investigate, and we were ordered to take him to Morant Bay, the affected area. We proceeded thither and found ample corroboration of the charges brought against the rebels, who, as is usually the case, had made full use of their brief supremacy to commit brutal atrocities. The first British force to arrive on the scene was the *Wolverene*, in time to rescue many white women and children who had hidden themselves in the bush. Most of the white men, who had assembled to defend the Courthouse, had been slaughtered or burnt alive in the subsequent conflagration. Is it surprising that the men had their angry passions aroused by the misery of the unfortunate women who rushed out of their hiding places and jumped into the boats on their arrival at their pier? And that *perhaps* they overstepped the limits of forbearance? Finally, the Government ordered the Governor's recall for trial. It was long and exhaustive; he was acquitted, but never

employed again. Public opinion ran very high for and against him, one of his principal defenders being Carlyle.

Courts martial were freely held at Morant and the insurgents sentenced to various penalties, a number were hung and more flogged. At one of the courts a coloured man named Baker complained that he had been unjustly flogged. An officer stated that he remembered the punishment. "But how do you remember ordering this particular man's flogging among so many?" asked the Court. "By his name," was the reply. "As he was a Baker, he was ordered to have a baker's dozen!"

Many years afterwards, when at Jamaica, during a dinner party the conversation turned on the rebellion; several incidents were related and one told by me excited a good deal of interest. It was to the effect that during the rebellion an officer of the police entered a house and in a room found a distracted white woman and a negro, the latter cowering in a corner. The woman informed the officer that the man had forcibly outraged her, whereupon he drew his revolver and shot him. Opinions were divided as to the justifiableness of the act, also some doubt was thrown on the authenticity of my story. At last one of the guests, who had hitherto remained silent, said, "I can vouch for the truth of the Commander's story, for I was the man who shot the beast. Wouldn't any man with red blood in his veins have done the same?" It was believed that if the rebellion had succeeded—it broke out prematurely—not a white person would have been spared. In this they would have been following the example of their neighbours in Haiti, where they rose and massacred all the French people.

On return to Port Royal we were ordered to Kingston; martial law still prevailed and we lay with our guns trained on the town and a landing party on the *qui vive*. The negroes, however, had become very subdued and polite. "Hush your mout, you must not jaw, dis is de day of Martial Law," was one of their refrains.

All this was not very exhilarating, and it was with great pleasure that we received orders for Barbadoes. The Buffs were quartered there and made us at home. The regiment gave some good balls, and we did our best with an occasional Bonnet Hop. The Creole girls are pretty,

charming and fond of dancing. They made sad havoc of our young affections.

One of our earliest visits was to La Guaira, the seaport of Venezuela. Being an open roadstead, we did not stay long, but most of us visited the capital, Caracas, and spent some enjoyable days there.

From La Guaira we went on to Trinidad, passing the island of Margarita—the island of pearls—and entering by the Dragon's Mouth into the Gulf of Paria. A few miles to the eastward is Port of Spain, the capital. Owing to the shallows, big ships have to anchor some distance off the town. The town is Spanish in appearance and design, which is only to be expected as we took it from them. The people were not one whit behind their neighbours in hospitality. An interesting trip was made to the great pitch lake of La Brea, where asphalt is a natural product. It may almost be described as one of the wonders of the world.

From Trinidad it was Northward Ho for Grenada, where we anchored off Georgetown, the capital. The town stands on a promontory, that shelters a most delightful little harbour. Probably it was formed in an extinct volcano by the lip being blown away on the sea side of it. The Captain decided to take the ship in, and we took a pilot. The first thing he did was to ground the ship, for which he was literally kicked off the bridge; however, by running the crew up and down the decks we started her and she came off, the Master took her in, and we moored in this ideal port. Among other attractions it had a fine bathing place with a fresh water shower. But one had to beware of stepping on sea-eggs, the spines of which break off and fester in the feet.

St. Vincent, to the Northward, was our next port of call, and we lay for some time in the harbour of Kingstown. It is remarkable how loyal all these islands were in the nomenclature of their chief towns and harbours. The island is as beautiful as the others, and we had many enjoyable rides about it, getting a visit to Soufrière, a volcano which was presumed to be extinct at that time, but which proved itself to be very much alive on the occasion of the awful catastrophe at Martinique. La Soufrière followed suit, and two thousand victims paid the penalty of living in its vicinity. This fearful disaster happened in May, 1902, and was one of the first tragedies

which—so far—have dominated the present century. A sad and stricken world is ours at the present time, but surely the hurricane of blood and misery must exhaust itself in time and be succeeded by a calm of tranquillity and universal peace. It ought to and must come, else all our sacrifices have been made in vain. By the inevitable laws of nature such catastrophes as the above are, alas! to be expected, but it is not beyond the genius of man to put a stop to further bloodshed attributable only to his own unbridled passions.

The island is also interesting as being the home of a few survivors of the Caribs, the original inhabitants of the archipelago, who remained behind or were overlooked when the tribe was deported to Bay Islands, Honduras. They are very clannish and keep much to themselves.

An amusing incident occurred during our stay, although it might have had a tragic ending. A defaulter, while being interrogated by the officer of the watch, suddenly made a bolt for one of the quarterdeck gunports and jumped overboard. Several men went after him, others joined in the rescue—nominally so, really for a bathe—until there were a good hundred or more in the water. Many of them amused themselves by ducking the would-be suicide, who was at last hauled on board rather the worse for wear.

In due course of time we arrived at St. Kitts. It may be generally described as a not too lofty mountain, at first precipitous and then sloping gradually to the sea ; it is generally cultivated and must have been very prosperous in the days when sugar paid. On the south-west slope is Basse-Terre, the chief town, and off it we came to an anchor. The French and English occupied this island simultaneously in 1625 ; on the war of 1666 it became a scene of carnage for nearly half a century, terminating only with the total expulsion of the French in 1702. Now, with the exception of the names, the French atmosphere has disappeared. Basseterre is an attractive little town, but like most of the others, creates a feeling of being in a backwater.

Brimstone Hill, which stands a few miles to the north-west of the town, is a natural curiosity. It is a lofty rock of no great size and is apparently a freak of nature, for it rises in solitary grandeur from the surrounding plain. It was heavily fortified at considerable cost—as usual. When you reach the top by the road which circles round

it there is nothing to reward you but ruined quarters, tanks and dismantled gun emplacements. A gateway bearing the date 1794 gives entrance to the citadel. These old fortifications which one encounters in such profusion are very interesting, but the effect is depressing. Our ancestors had not learned the lesson of sea power, and in the West Indies alone wasted millions of pounds sterling which would have been spent with advantage on the fleet.

The bay is quite open, and while here we encountered the effects of a hurricane, the pest of the tropics. Luckily we were in the outer sector, and did not suffer the full force of it, but it was quite enough to go on with. The centre passed to the Northward over the island of St. Thomas, in the vicinity of which, on Salt Island, the steamship *Rhone* was lost with a large number of people. We rode it out and watched the remaining craft meet their fate, being powerless to render them any assistance.

Finally we returned to Barbadoes for a spell, which was terminated by orders to proceed to Jamaica, and we had to bid a final adieu to our many kind friends. More than one of our number felt sad, especially a member of the wardroom who had succumbed to the fascinations of a fair Barbadian, and for whom we hoisted the customary wreath of flowers and greenery between the fore and mainmast on the wedding day.

So behold the ship standing out of Carlisle Bay for the last time. On this occasion we made a successful entry into Port Royal and took up a buoy in fine style. We were to wait for our relief, the *Phœbe*, but we little thought that it would be six weary months before she put in an appearance. But so it was, and but for an occasional trip to sea for target practice we might have grounded on our beef bones.

It was fashionable at one time to heap obloquy on the gunnery of the past. It is not necessary to champion all the ships of the fleet, but I can answer for ours. Much depended upon the Gunnery Lieutenant, and we had a very efficient one. Holding the office of gunnery mid, it fell to my lot to write up the gunnery log; thus I am in a position to affirm that all drills were carried out most scrupulously. There was no illegal waste of ammunition; we deplored the meagre allowance devoted to practice. It should be recalled that modern gunnery with all its appliances had not appeared then, but an honest effort

was always made to hit the target, round which the ship circled under steam. When one looks back to the days of friction tubes, trigger laniards, old-fashioned locks, dispart and tangent sights, one marvels that we obtained the results we did. Then the wooden carriages on which the guns were mounted, the training tackle, side tackle and handspikes, and a wooden quoin for elevation. The distance had to be judged by the officer of the quarters.

It was grand to watch a maindeck battery of twenty-six guns, to hear the thunderous noise the trucks made when the guns were trained from bow to stern, the reverberating crash when a broadside (not called a salvo yet) was fired and the guns recoiled to the full extent of their breechings. Two gun positions were fitted each side for dismounting, and the order to dismount the gun and shift carriages always provoked great emulation. Only a stated number of pulls was allowed on the dismounting tackle, and it required some beef to accomplish it. Salutes were always fired by the maindeck battery, and were supervised by the Gunner. He stationed himself in a vacant place between the cables just before the cook's galley and gave the order 'Fire One,' then 'Fire Two,' and so on, until the requisite number of guns had been fired. He timed himself by walking to and fro repeating "If I wasn't a Gunner I shouldn't be here" between each round. Our first Gunner was invalided and replaced by a more scientific worthy who carried a watch with a second hand. We once tried a different method; all the laniards were spliced into a running line which was rove through at block aft. When the order was given the ship's boys manned the line and ran away with it, each gun going off as the laniard tautened. At one inspection, with the target laid out at 2,000 yards, we knocked it to smithereens at the third round, which proved rather embarrassing, as the Admiral was pressed for time. Night quarters was a big affair, and the gun which got off the first round received great kudos.

We used to land our smallarm-men, or to give the more ambitious title, the battalion, with the marines, two field guns, stretcher parties and other trimmings. Headed by the band it made a brave show as it marched off accompanied by the usual crowd of the unemployed, who always seem on hand. A large proportion was small boys; of course, black ones, but with all the usual

characteristics of the germ. It had a fine moral effect on the natives, nor did our friends withhold their admiration, and we accepted their compliments with becoming modesty. Possibly our drill might have elicited some adverse criticism from the sister Service, but they generally have a good-humoured tolerance for sailors playing at soldiers.

At Port Royal we remained, and the shore was more or less in quarantine. Yellow fever was prevalent and Kingston out of bounds, so was Port Royal itself—no great hardship. There remained only Port Henderson (a small collection of huts), on the opposite side of the harbour ; of course, it had the inevitable grogshop, but there was a priceless spring of clear and cool fresh water that kept a very fair-sized bath going, in which we usually spent our afternoons.

Thanks to the precautions taken we only lost four of our shipmates during the above time. The last stage of the disease is known as the 'Black Vomit,' and is a fatal sign. Yet there is an authentic case of a marine who had reached this crisis and who on being told that his case was hopeless announced that he had no intention of dying as he had a mother to support. It is gratifying to know that the man did recover, a remarkable instance of will power. This terrible disease was not understood then and most disastrous epidemics broke out. Now, thanks to research, it is a different matter and only a few sporadic cases occur. The Panama Zone is a magnificent exposition of what science can effect.

We buried our dead in the Palisades, a ghastly place of crumbling tombs invaded by land-crabs, just outside Port Royal. One could hardly help surmising 'Whose turn next?' The burial ground at Fort Augusta is now used. This fort stands on a spit of land which dominates the passage to Kingston but has been abandoned for many years ; the legend connected with it has been dealt with in my book *An Admiral's Yarns*.

Port Royal existed for the dockyard. It was purely a naval station, and it lies at the extremity of a remarkable spit of land which forms the fine harbour of Kingston. Possessing great possibilities, the harbour should be provided with a dry dock that could be constructed at Rock Springs, to the eastward of the town, The strategic importance of the port is significant now that the Panama Canal is in being.

A detachment of a West Indian regiment was stationed at Port Royal and some black gunners. The dockyard was very well kept, and except that it lacked a dry dock was efficient ; there was a good house for the Commodore and the usual 'Harmony Row' for the officials. The remainder of the village was ramshackle and the roads ill-kept. The population depended on the Services for their living, and was of all shades of colour, from ebony to almost white ; many of the latter bore very familiar Service names. It is not for me to say what they were or whether they were entitled to bear them. I can only repeat a remark which a somewhat brazen youth made at a teafight, namely, that "At Port Royal it is a wise child who knows its own Father." The men earned a living by fishing and boating. The ladies washed for the Services and were capital laundresses. When a new ship arrived on the station it was invaded by a bevy of these women—of all shades—all equally clamorous to secure custom. Persistently flourishing certificates before one's face, they emphasized their qualities as washerwomen with no uncertain bashfulness. "I the best washerwoman here, Sir. You know Admiral Belay? He my father." "You know Captain Crosstree? He my brother." And there was no peace until you had made a selection. It was the same at all the islands except that family connections were mostly confined to Port Royal. Who does not remember Sally Cook, Josephine Johnson, Mary Ann Smith, Betsy Pastry and others? They still gave Dignity Balls, for the description of which I must refer my readers to Marryat, for they had gone out of fashion in my time.

One could write much on this interesting place, once the home of pirates and buccaneers, finally a post for the Royal Navy. Imagination runs riot on the scenes that have occurred there. Perhaps the most catastrophic were when it was overwhelmed by earthquake in 1692, destroyed by fire in 1703, and partially submerged by the sea in 1722. The earthquake in 1910 did comparatively little damage. On Gallows Point I saw the remains of the very erection on which pirates were hung, as described by Michael Scott in *Tom Cringle's Log*. The port is now abandoned as a naval station.

The *Constance* established a sanatorium at Apostles Battery, Port Henderson. It is so named as it mounted twelve guns. It was an incalculable boon to our sick, for it was too risky to send ordinary cases to the fine naval

hospital, where they would have been liable to infection from other patients. No ship ought to have been left among such conditions. Later an order was issued that any ship in which fever broke out was at once to start for the North ; it doubtless saved numbers of lives, for usually the fever disappeared when Bermuda was reached. Nevertheless, Happy Valley, the picturesque graveyard belonging to the Service, contains several graves of victims to the scourge, and the island has been known to have epidemics of it. On the last occasion of an epidemic at Port Royal five officers out of seven belonging to the *Aboukir*, guardship, died. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to the splendid men who devote their lives to medical discovery and research.

At last the coy and reluctant *Phœbe* put in an appearance ; we played her in to the tune of 'Where have you been all the day?' cleared out with all despatch for Bermuda, and one breezy morning arrived off the 'Vexed Bermoothes,' for it does blow hard in that part of the world. Boreas is most impartial and has a dangerous habit of shifting eight points (ninety degrees), or more, quite suddenly, which is highly inconvenient for sailing ships, to put it mildly. Happy Valley contains two witnesses to this in the shape of memorials to the *Acorn* and *Contest*, Sloops that were lost off the island with all hands. They were in company with the *Hussar* frigate, and were last seen just before a shift of wind, which the frigate dealt with successfully.

Off St. George's we met the *Royal Alfred*, the new flagship, from Halifax, with the Admiral to winter at Bermuda, where there is a most comfortable Admiralty House. The grounds contain some wonderful tunnels constructed by the celebrated Admiral Lord Dundonald. Of course, she brought the Admiral's Lady, his carriage, horses, his ox and his ass, and all his entourage. It was the custom of the times.

Following in her wake (with becoming humility), we steamed up to Grassy Bay, off Ireland Island, where the dockyard is situated, getting a good view of the islands as we passed along the coast ; the natives claim to have one for each day of the year. The islands are a contrast to the West Indies, for the highest point only reaches an elevation of 260 feet. It is of coral formation, and the inhabitants use the material to build their houses, usually without a fireplace, for in this blessed country coal is not

needed. If we could only shift these islands of ours to a like position and do the miners in the eye we would!

The bay is a bad anchorage, open to all winds, and in spite of the reefs a very heavy sea runs at times. However, we did not remain long outside, but proceeded into the Camber. This is an artificial harbour formed by a stone breakwater with three arms, enclosing several acres and capable of sheltering many ships. In 1868 a floating dock was towed out that had a lifting power of 11,000 tons, and the area of the Camber has been considerably increased. The Camber was built by convicts in the bad old days; they were housed on board an old frigate, the *Tenedos*, and there is a ghastly tale of an *émeute* which was put down in the usual manner *vi et armis*. Numbers were flogged, and they were literally decimated, every tenth man being shot. The frigate was being broken up and her timbers, of good old English oak, were still sound. She had been put together with copper bolts; such bolts are invaluable on board ship, and discovering the above fact, when no one was about after work was finished, we —but 'nuff said.

The dockyard still had, in addition to the warders, sentries posted, furnished by infantry stationed in barracks overlooking the yard. These sentries would allow nobody to pass after dark without a countersign, which fact often led to trouble if the pedestrian had forgotten the word—as frequently happened. The delinquent would find himself shepherded into the sentry-box at the bayonet's point. Once the culprit was a woman. In reply to the sentry's challenge she had to admit that she did not remember the word, but added, "I am the Admiral's Lady," to which the man replied—with a strict sense of duty, "If you were the Admiral's Wife I wouldn't let you pass!"

One night while on watch I was told by the quartermaster that there was something strange in the water near the ship. I had the dinghy manned, and taking a lantern, went to investigate. I tried to see what it was, until at last a hoarse voice cried, "Take that damned lantern out of my eyes." It was one of the Lieutenants, who had forgotten the password and so had adopted the means of swimming off in preference to being locked out with no possibility of accommodation.

The Bermudas have so often been described that it need not be attempted too fully. We fairly revelled in

the change ; the climate was grand and the coloured folk were reasonably polite ; they had not been spoilt. The latter are descendants of slaves, and it is remarkable what a type of their own they have assumed. Their features are decidedly more aquiline, and they are less dusky than the darkies of the West Indies, but they have the same faults, vanity being one of them. In later years my wife gave our washerwoman an old pair of black lace stockings, and when she next appeared she had them on, but she had first put on a pair of white ones to show them off.

The families have been there for a long period ; originally slave owners, they have been forced by circumstances to keep stores, but none has suffered loss of position. Many naval and military officers have found wives among the charming girls of the island. One announcement of such a happy event provoked much merriment. The bride was described as the daughter of a General. So he was, but the title was not given in full ; it should have been General Dealer.

The roads are shaded by cedar trees which seem to scent the air, especially in the neighbourhood of the little yards where famous sailing boats are built. The scenery is charming ; the little creeks and miniature harbours, the picturesque cottages all with whitewashed roofs to catch rain and fill the tanks ; the Bermudian is dependent on the rainfall for his water for drinking and washing purposes ; an occasional ferry to cross to the next island, the frequent sight of a blue or red bird (Blue Robin and Cardinal Bird), which are protected by law, and you have a *coup d'œil* that is hard to beat.

At night—when the moon obliges—these walks are particularly enchanting. The white sandy road is enshrouded at times by dense masses of trees ; their gloomy and shadowy depths seem to contain some mystery. You plunge into one of these tunnels and its darksome solitude induces a feeling of awe. Then a sudden emergence under a cloudless sky dominated by a brilliant moon and sprinkled profusely with myriads of twinkling stars, and tranquillity succeeds. The only disturbing factor is the shrilling of the cicadas, a harsh and tuneless solo to the gently murmurous obligato of the wavelets rippling on the sandy beach.

Why is it that the stars twinkle with increased brilliancy and the moon is so much brighter? A woman

once asked me the reason, and my jesting reply was, "This is a different moon to our English one." To my surprise she took it literally, and I was mean enough to let it go at that.

We had great times with the *Royal Alfred*. Being the first ironclad that we had met, she was naturally an object of great interest. Converted from a liner she was still heavily sparred. Many enjoyable gatherings took place and we organized singsongs, suppers, and got up theatricals at which some of the mids made their debut in women's characters. Our most ambitious effort was a burlesque in one act, entitled *Shylock, or the Merchant of Venice preserved, an entirely new rendering of Shakespeare*." It gave an immense amount of amusement to the performers and audience. The programme was a masterpiece, the libretto by Francis Talfourd and the incidental music was supplied by an officer, a Musical Bachelor, rather rare in those days.

And there were the seining parties, a cutter to convey the party, a dinghy to shoot the seine, and a sandy cove for the scene of operations. Light a fire on the beach, put the best of the catch on to fry, and you will learn what fried fish really is. A cold meat pie to follow, washed down by Bass, and you have a Barmecidal banquet. Conclude the treatment with baccy and a singsong and return to the ship healthily tired and happy about midnight.

About this time the *Favourite*, an armour-plated corvette, arrived. An unfortunate affair occurred on board. A drunken prisoner in irons under the sentry's charge was ordered to be gagged on account of the annoyance he gave by his bad language. When he became quiet the sentry removed the gag and discovered that the man was dead, having been suffocated. This tragedy led to orders forbidding prisoners to be gagged. The operation used to be performed by putting a belaying pin between the jaws and lashing it behind the head. After its discontinuance I have known the sentry to be supplied with a bucket of water and a cup with which he washed out the prisoner's mouth when he made use of offensive language!

We now prepared for our passage to the North, and in March, 1868, left for Quebec with orders to call at Halifax. The usual passage was experienced, and after passing through the Gulf Stream, we escaped fog, the

mariner's dread and the pest of that part of the world. The Gulf Stream is so clearly defined off the coast of America that a blockade runner with a warship in hot pursuit during the Civil War, noticing the line of demarcation gradually edged over into it and escaped by its aid. Apparently the hunter had not so keen a power of observation as his quarry. As it was we turned in in tropical fashion, and were awakened during the night by intense cold, glad to pile on blankets, for we had got into the arctic current which runs counter to the stream, all this in the period of little over an hour.

Halifax did not impress us very much, but the surrounding country makes amends. Both are pretty much the same still: they were at my last visit in 1894. Most of the houses were built of wood, and fires were frequent. But what a change in prices! Salmon sixpence a pound, a fat goose for eighteen pence and so on. The gunroom lived like fighting cocks. On shore we got gargantuan feeds for the modest sum of eighteen pence.

Halifax had a small dockyard, later on a dry dock was constructed that had been much needed. Here we saw the first trams (horse cars), which tinkled along in most leisurely fashion.

We did not remain long; the navigation of the St. Lawrence, closed during the winter months, was just declared open, so we left early in April for Quebec.

During our stay at Bermuda our Captain left us to take up a home appointment, and his successor arrived before we left. The son of a distinguished Field-Marshal, Hugh Talbot Burgoyne, our new Captain, had earned the V.C. in the Naval Brigade during the Crimean War; he had been promoted rapidly and was a younger man than the Commander, but he was possessed of infinite tact and bonhomie, and soon became popular with all of us. With him came his wife, who proved a good friend to us youngsters. He was not one to let the grass grow under his feet. The Fenian disturbances were still in existence, and a ship was wanted to provide crews for extempore gunboats in addition to three regular ones already stationed on the lakes, so we pushed ahead, and on the way passed through extensive icefields and had our first view of icebergs. These always look better at a distance. Arriving in the Gulf of Newfoundland we had a rough experience. At midnight sail had been

shortened, and the ship was about to be 'Hove To' for soundings. A heavy squall struck us, and in a trice all three topsails were in rags, and the topgallant sails, blown out of the bolt-ropes, were skurrying away to leeward. Luckily the spars stood with the exception of the jibboom, which went short off in the cap.

It was a case for 'All Hands,' and a heavy job it proved. The topsails were flogging the air like cart-whips, while what was left of the jibboom pounded under the bows as if it was trying to get on board. No doubt it resented being out on such a night, and who would blame it? The wind howled in its very worst manner; the temperature fell below zero, and the whole affair was topdressed with sleet and snow. The men had great difficulty in getting aloft, so unneighbourly were the elements. After two years of tropical life it proved to be more than some of the men could stand, and we sent down numbers with frost bites and chills; it was early morning before the fight was over. However, during the struggle we had raised steam, under which we reached Quebec, taking in a pilot at Father Point. A pilot is absolutely necessary on that river, as the buoys get out of position frequently owing to the rapid current, and local conditions are always changing.

It has been noticed, probably, that a ship had to be 'Hove To' to take soundings; in other words, to ascertain the depth of water in her assumed position. This obsolete operation may be worth describing. It commenced with an order to 'Pass the line Along,' that being done by a portion of the watch distributed from the stern to the forecastle, the line being passed outside everything from aft forward, and the end attached to the deepsea lead on the forecastle. Each man as he passed the line forward retained a small coil in his hands; the reason for this will be seen directly. The deepsea lead was a bar of that material and weighed fifty-six pounds; it was about two feet long and two to three inches thick; the lower end was concave and filled with tallow, to obtain the nature of the bottom; this was called 'Arming the Lead.' When all was ready the ship was 'Hove To' if under sail, or the engines stopped if under steam. When the way was checked the officer of the watch gave the order 'Heave,' upon which the lead was thrown overboard from the forecastle. Each man in succession, as he felt the weight of the lead, threw his

coil overboard clear of all obstructions, such as the guns or chains, and called out "Watch there, Watch," as an admonition to the next man, or if he felt bottom, announced the fact and the number of fathoms, which could be told by the marks on the lead line. If no soundings were called, it devolved on the quartermasters to endeavour to get one from the stern. The line was then hauled in. The first thing to be done was to examine the arming and note the nature of the sand, stones or shells. It is obvious that if the navigating officer had a pretty accurate knowledge of the position and the results obtained tallied with it as shown on the chart, this process went a long way toward verifying it.

But under favourable circumstances it was a crude performance, and navigation in those days was a bold Flapper with limited means and appliances, who has in these days developed into a charming Goddess with a toilet table full of artistic accessories. Take by way of illustration Thompson's (Lord Kelvin) sounding machine, patent log, and compass. If we had only had them! Nevertheless, we got about all right, but what price Columbus and the early navigators? Their courage fills one with admiration.

The arming gives useful information to the navigator. Owing to our splendid surveys the nature of the bottom round the British Isles is well known. It is said that old and experienced hands in the coasting trade navigate solely by the lead and their knowledge of the coast. Several of these worthies used to forgather in a public-house that we will call Tomkin's Bar in Tarrytown. One of them was very pretentious as to his capabilities with regard to the above. His cronies conspired to give him a lesson ; accordingly they bribed his men, and scraping up some of the sand off the floor of the taproom gave it to them to be put on the arming. This they did on the first opportunity, and took it to their intended victim, who was asleep in his bunk. They roused him ; he sat up, rubbed his eyes, looked at the arming for a second or two, and then shouted out, "Holy Moses, let go the anchor, we are on the top of Tomkin's Bar!"

These old soakers were rare good seamen, and so were the quartermasters in the Navy. We always had two on watch at sea, one of whom was responsible for the steering and the other for the con. When steering by the wind the latter's position was on the conning

stool to windward, whence he conned the ship. Then were heard the quaint old sea terms now obsolete, and which must sound more or less like a foreign language to the modern sailor, such as 'Luff,' 'No Higher,' 'Very well Thus,' 'Nothing Off,' and so on. These orders were always repeated by the quartermaster at the binnacle, and the two performed a kind of duet.

The passage up the river for the first hundred miles is like an arm of the sea. Higher up we see the cultivated land on each side with picturesque villages. Being the land of the French Canadians, the houses and churches have an individuality of their own, and could not be mistaken for anything in the way of English architecture. Many of the villages are summer resorts.

At Quebec it is necessary to moor. The river is tidal, and the ebb makes with great force. Woe betide anyone who falls overboard. We always kept lifebuoys veered astern, and they were the means of saving several lives. Many large rafts of timber used to float down the river to be loaded into the timber ships that frequented Quebec. As a rule they were skilfully handled, but were not always under control; once a large raft under the above condition split across the bows of our ship, the two parts scraping along the sides. The launches were lying at the booms, and they were lifted out of the water and rode over the logs, taking the water again when the logs had passed under; it was a quaint sight.

Opposite the spot where we lay, a large plate, fixed some height up the cliff, announced "Here Montgomery fell." He was the leader of an unsuccessful attack by the Americans in 1775.

The view from the citadel or from the Eastern batteries is very fine. On the opposite shore is the town of Levis. In the foreground is the Isle d'Orleans, and in the middle distance to the Northward are the falls of Montmorency, 300 feet high. On each side flows a river; they unite, and encircling the island stretch away in far distance. Numerous craft are plying and many are moored alongside the wharves, while down below the busy life of the lower town goes on in full view.

Two regiments of foot and some artillery were quartered in the city, and another regiment lay at Point Levis. The townspeople were remarkably hospitable. Dances and picnics were the order of the day. But it

must not be imagined that we made no return, although that was not what these kind people were out for. We occasionally gave an afternoon hop, when with the guns run forward, housed in by awnings, and the deck french-chalked, we kept it up until dark. Those Canadian girls danced well, in spite of the crinoline—the fashion of that period. The dance most in vogue was the Trois-temps valse, graceful and pretty. All these modern ones, such as Bunny Hugs, Turkey Trots, and Jazzes, seem to be a debased form of the valse, and with the exception of the Tango have no style. They seem a case of 'go as you please,' and girls have to take a partner with them or else they get left. But dances, like fashions, go in cycles. At that time the Varsoviana and Schottische, the Polka Valse, Galop, Mazurka, Lancers and Quadrille were the vogue. The Highland Schottische and Barn Dance succeeded, and now we have the grotesque dances alluded to above. It certainly fascinates one to watch the performers indulge in sympathetic wriggles and joggles with serious faces, as if in agony as to whether their steps don't fit. The old dances may come in again. True, the square dances were for the Chaperons, although the young ones enjoyed them too. Now Chaperons are out of fashion. Anxious mothers are things of the past or else sternly repressed. Fathers don't count, and Lucinda is emancipated and fully able to take care of herself. *Tempora mutantur*.

We despatched a party of men and officers to the lakes to man the two hired steamers that were to act as gunboats in case of any more Fenian troubles, and they had plenty of yarns for us when they returned in October, when we left for Halifax *en route* for Plymouth to pay off. They seemed to have had a glorious time, but we remained faithful to Quebec. The hour of parting arrived, and making our adieux we tore ourselves away ; rather the ship did it for us. With the band playing 'The Girl I left behind Me' we steamed down the river in full view of our friends who had assembled on the terrace to see us off.

Part of the 16th foot that had been on active service in upper Canada embarked on board for passage to Halifax. A frigate's maindeck did not lend itself to trooping. The officers were taken into the wardroom, but for the men it was a makeshift. On the first night a startling episode occurred. One of the privates ran

amok on the maindeck with a drawn bayonet ; he was disarmed—luckily without doing any damage. The subalterns slept in cots on the maindeck ; it was curious how many of them came down the first night. Perhaps the mids knew the why and wherefore, and could have dilated on the subtleties of a slippery hitch. But once bit, twice shy.

Off Halifax the engines broke down, which was not at all polite with guests on board. A fresh breeze was blowing into the harbour and we made sail. The harbour, off the dockyard, is not too spacious, so we kept well over to the North shore and shortened sail to round to ; she had a perverse fit and would not. A gunboat was lying alongside and seemed destined to be our prey, and her crew 'abandoned ship' with remarkable celerity. We let go an anchor, ran out several shackles and boused to, but the cable snapped like packthread ; a second anchor was called upon and responded nobly, and with the maintopsail set aback we brought up. All this with the flagship looking on ! However, the gunboat was saved for further service in H.M. Navy. The unfortunate cutters had a painful experience groping for the anchors. *Experto crede!*

This was not the only experience of seeking for lost property. Some spars were brought off late one evening and made fast alongside ; they broke adrift and the officer of the watch sent the cutters away at midnight to search for them. It was bitter weather, dark as pitch, snowing and freezing ; the spray froze on us. After we had shoved off a furious blizzard burst and we just managed to fetch the dockyard. We marched both crews up to the guardhouse, where we found the Commander wind-bound. It took off a bit and he ordered both boats to be manned again. Orders are orders, but it took us over an hour to fetch off to the ship (about 500 yards), and I think he was regretting it all the way. I was so numbed that I had to be carried up the side ; a thoughtful Lieutenant gave me three fingers of rum and I turned in under a pile of blankets, but it was hours before I was warm.

Being under orders for home, no time was lost, and a few days later, with the inevitable band accompaniment, our men cheering and the ships in harbour responding, we slipped our buoy and moved slowly ahead. Horrors ! The buoy fouled our screw and further

progress was ignominiously arrested! Off came dockyard lighters and divers, and twenty-four hours afterwards we crept bashfully out of harbour. We had a very rough passage, a succession of Easterly gales, until we picked up the Westerlies and arrived at Plymouth on December 9, 1868. Three days before our arrival we passed a derelict full-rigged ship. She hailed from St. John's, New Brunswick. We hove to and sent a boat, but not even the proverbial cat was on board. We stood on, leaving another mystery of the sea behind us. It seemed to me extraordinary that we did not bring her in; she was not waterlogged and would have been good salvage. But we were homeward bound to pay off, and the girls at Plymouth must have had hold of the towrope.

Without further adventure we dropped anchor in Plymouth Sound. The old Admiralty pattern anchor with its wooden stock was a most dependable friend. To stow it the operation was performed by the use of two tackles known by the quaint titles of the 'Cat' and the 'Fish,' the anchor being first 'Catted' and then 'Fished.' One would suppose that the cat would in ordinary circumstances go *after* the fish.

Of course, the ship had to have a paying-off inspection, never so formidable as one during the commission. One does not care whether the inspecting officer raises 'Cain' or not, but no decent man wants to find fault on such an occasion. After this the ship was taken into the Hamoaze to be stripped. All hands dug out to get Christmas at home; we had just twelve working days. We worked double tides—overtime is not known in the Navy—guns were returned, stores cleared out, coal bunkers emptied, and masts and yards returned, only the lower masts being left for the dockyard riggers to take out. This operation necessitated a ship going alongside the sheer-hulk. At Devonport, the *Kent*, and old two-decker, served this useful purpose. After this had been done the ship would be moored in Rotten Row.

The *Kent* was a weird-looking craft. With its enormous sheerlegs it looked as if it would easily capsize. Many ships performed quite useful functions in their old age, and conversion into a sheer-hulk was one. It seems to me that when Dibdin described Tom Bowling as a *sheer-hulk* he committed a *lapsus calami*, and ought to

have designated him—with more correctness and point—as a *mere-hulk*.

The paying-off ceremony was conducted by the Flag-Captain, who inspected the ship, poking his nose into every nook and corner. For the last time the roll of the drum resounded along the decks as the men fell in. Never again as a body should we meet, and, in spite of cheering thoughts of home, one's reflections were rather mournful. Many happy days we had spent together; with these honest fellows we had overcome many dangers. There was, and I believe there still is, a strong tie of mutual esteem between officers and men of the Royal Navy.

One by one the men filed past the Captain and Officers to receive the sums due to them. Some of them who had been prudent received comparatively large sums, one man taking over £200; he had been very thrifty and had done a lot of tailoring for his shipmates. After being paid they were free to leave the ship on the six weeks' leave granted them as a reward for over three years' foreign service!

Outside the dockyard gates they would be met by expectant people, not always of the right sort. There was a large class that found the bluejacket an easy prey, but I don't think it holds good now. Jack's surname is not Juggins; he is just as goodhearted and charitable as ever, but with education has come prudence. With all their pay on them, many of our men must have been squeezed dry by the harpies ever on the lookout for such an opportunity. Subsequently the Admiralty established the banking system, by which a man can get a percentage on his money and draw it out as he needs it. Many a man has been saved by the above, and the Admiralty deserve credit for it, so all honour to them. We are ready enough to blame them.

The Marines marched off to their barracks, and thereby escaped the delicate attentions of the Delilahs and Jews for a time. Later on it became the custom for the ship's company to march to the dockyard gates, whence they dispersed, and the police kept off the privateers.

A very smart Corvette paid off about this time: the Captain was a fine man, a good officer, strict but just, and not given to much verbiage. He was most popular with the crew, and the men fell in on the jetty and

expressed a wish that he would bid them goodbye. The First-Lieutenant went to the Captain and informed him that the men would appreciate a few final words. He did not keep them waiting, and soon his head appeared above the hammock nettings; he looked at them for a few moments and then made his speech. "You may all go to hell, and I'm damned glad to get rid of you." It was answered by three cheers—they knew what he meant—and they marched off chuckling delightedly. The same man once administered a severe snub to a bumptious young Lieutenant. It was not the custom in those days for officers to wish each other 'Good Morning.' I don't know why, but it wasn't. A man is not at his *best* before breakfast! The young fellow, seeing the Captain come on deck, advanced in an airy fashion and wished him 'Good Morning.' The Captain looked at him for a moment and then replied, "Good Morning be damned, Sir; go the other side of the deck."

So, on the 24th of December, 1868, the *Constance* paid off, too late for some of us to get home until the following day, myself one of them. We mids repaired to Morshead's Hotel, Devonport, a great rendezvous for junior officers. There we dined together for the last time in a somewhat subdued mood, for, as Marryat has demonstrated, even midshipmen have feelings. One of our number, in a sentimental mood, went back to the ship and kept a lonely vigil until the hauling down of the pendant the following morning. The youth became a parson and when we next met held a living in Nova Scotia. It was the last commission for three more. One entered the Chinese Customs and rose to a high position, another went out to Canada, married and settled there—was Quebec responsible for this?—and the last had a promising career cut short by consumption. In such a manner did the disintegration of the gunroom commence—and I believe it to be fairly typical. Now nearly all have passed over. We survivors—old and on the shelf—sit musing and recalling the joyous days of youth and the happy hours we spent. '*Bis pueri senes.*' I reached home in time for Christmas festivities and settled down to enjoy my brief spell of leave.

CHAPTER V

THE *DUKE OF WELLINGTON*

Death makes no conquest of this Conqueror;
For now he lives in fame, though not in life.

AT the termination of my leave I joined the above ship, and several of my late shipmates joined too.

The *Duke* was now guardship, and though a larger and finer ship than the *Victory,* she lacked the air of historic romance that pervaded the latter. The famous soldier was appropriately represented by the huge three-decker that bore his name. Largest of the kind ever built by the British, and armed with 121 guns, she seemed the incarnation of majestic splendour.

We were introduced into a scene of endless bustle; amidst it all we moved insignificant and apparently unheeded, nobody's children. Being now senior midshipmen, we had nothing to fear from the oldsters, and we made full use of our freedom.

Portsmouth was not an ideal place for idle youths. At that time there was no Early Closing Act, and the hotels for the better class, and the pubs for the others, kept open until the early morning. Consequently, there were sounds of revelry by night and the pickets had a good deal of rough work at times. In those days there were no naval pickets; as a result Jack was not much interfered with but avoided, as far as possible, by the comparatively small police force. Disturbances took place frequently, and there were certain streets that would have been unsafe for the police to venture into.

High Street was the busy and important street of the town; it is full of interest. Here is the George Hotel, from which Nelson embarked in September, 1805, escaping by a ladder from a back window and going off from the beach to avoid the crowd. Nearly opposite is the old church of St. Thomas. It dates from the

twelfth century and has far more interesting souvenirs than my limited space permits me to describe. Three instances must suffice. First, the organ that is two hundred years old, intended for the Cathedral of Toledo, but the vessel that was taking it was wrecked in the vicinity. Secondly, the gilt model of a ship presented in 1710 by Prince George (to serve as a weather vane), a quaint old relic that would bear closer inspection. Lastly, in this church Charles II was married to the Infanta of Portugal, whereby the nation acquired Bombay and (according to Charles) made a better bargain than he did.

Higher up, on the other side, is the house in which George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, was assassinated in 1628, while lower down stood the 'Blue Posts' of Marryat's time, since burned down, and still farther the Star and Garter at the Point, where in Joe Spencer's time we called for a milk punch while waiting for the Gosport ferry. Its rooms have been occupied by Hood, St. Vincent, Nelson, Sir John Franklin, William III, when Duke of Clarence, and Louis Phillipe, when in exile. 'The Fountain' was another well-known hostelry; it was converted into an officers' house, but I believe failed in that direction. I am not surprised, for a friend of mine told me that he put up there with his wife, but as she was invariably addressed as 'Miss' he thought it was a bit dubious and removed at an early opportunity.

Just think of the associations connected with the old street. The distinguished officers who have taken the air there. One can picture the voluminous blue uniforms, the huge cocked hats, superimposed on powdered wig and pigtail, the dress sword cocked at a swaggering angle, the kerseymere breeches, silk stockings and buckled shoes.

There they met, gossiped, snuffed and adjourned to the 'George' for a glass of sherry, port or punch, over which they continued their discussions on the fortunes of war or the dullness of peace. How 'Fighting Jack Hardy' of the *Brilliant* had brought in another prize, the lucky dog! The latest promotions, scandals and Bob Wilder's losses at cards. Now its glories have departed; shops and residents have moved to Southsea, and High Street is naught but a street of silent memories.

It was still a walled town in 1869; the walls and

ramparts were not removed until 1875. Ingress and egress was not permitted between certain hours. With increased and improved armaments more forts had been constructed out at Hilsea, three miles off on the edge of the creeks which cut off Portsea from the mainland, thus making it an island. Then more were built at Portsdown and at Spithead until the entire neighbourhood fairly bristled with them, and the monument to Nelson, on the hill, no longer stood in splendid isolation.

Now, with the exception of the saluting battery on Governor's Green, all the town walls and batteries have disappeared, but some of the fine old gateways have been preserved. The huge tidal basin, known as the Mill Pond, which was formed by excavating earth to build the ramparts, has been filled in again by materials derived from the same ramparts, and serves the excellent purpose of recreation-grounds for officers and men, as well as providing official residences. A pleasing substitute for mud and dirty water.

Our ancestors doted on forts, and what enormous sums of money were lavished on them! The old bogey of invasion always obsessed them. Portsmouth might be taken on the land side and the dockyard destroyed! The amusing commentary to which is that the dockyard was outside the old fortifications! Napoleon gave up invasion in despair, but still the expenditure went on.

We see the same dread in the Great War. Why did we keep a large army marking time on the East Coast, when it would have probably turned the scale in our favour had it been sent to France? We have had no answer to that question and never will have one. Germany knew better than try it—although this is the day of steam, not sail, and there was no waiting for a fair wind. If they *had* come, what a day it would have been for our fleet!

In 1066 William the Conqueror successfully (we must admit to our great advantage) invaded England. Since that time there have been ten foreign invasions between 1069 and 1798 (the last). These may be catalogued as two Spanish (including the Armada), one Danish, six French, and one Dutch (when the last menaced Chatham), and they may all be described as abortive. I doubt whether the enemy himself expected to do more than annoy our insular pride. A great deal was made by writers and speakers before the war, of the axiom that "Our

frontiers are on the enemy's Coast Line." When it came to the push we had not the courage to act on it.

Now for the famous Hard, the water front outside the dockyard gates. It was the great place of embarkacation, and the watermen did a fine business. Early in the morning, when the liberty men were going off to the *Duke*, the watermen stood by their boats calling out 'What Oh!' which earned for the ship that sobriquet. The Hard, proper, is a stone causeway which runs into the water from about the centre of the street and is an aid to embarking at any state of the tide; it was surrounded on each side by thousands of oak logs seasoning in the mud. There is no longer any need for them, and I believe the Hard is now very little used.

The houses fronting the Hard were chiefly public-houses with a few important and well-patronized shops. The pubs did a roaring trade. For the officers there was the Keppel's Head, or to give it its nickname, the 'Nut,' a great rendezvous for the N.O. The waiter was always William (in my time he was the 'One-Eyed'), and the boy Cupid. For Welsh rarebits and bitter ale it was unrivalled, and both formed the staple snack before going off at night.

The Theatre Royal was in the Commercial Road, near the railway-station. It was on the old-fashioned lines, and the pit occupied the whole of the ground floor up to the stage. The front row was reserved for us, and was known as the 'Duke's Pew.' The prices were low, and Friday night was the fashionable one for the élite. It was the age of Burlesque (not Revue), such as *Black-eyed Susan* and *A Military Billy Taylor,* both by Burnand, an Extravaganza, *The Pilgrim of Love,* by Byron, crammed full of jokes and puns, tuneful songs (not yet lyrics), and dances. Then we were treated to popular Opera-Bouffe, such as *La Grande Duchesse* by Offenbach, in which the name part was taken by that accomplished actress Emily Soldene, considered by many critics to be a close rival of Schneider, the creatrix of the part.

In the Burlesques were Edward Terry, Dewar, Fanny Oliver and Kate Bishop, all well-known and popular artists. A cordial feeling existed between the artists and the audience, as the following incident may illustrate: One evening the members of the Duke's Pew provided themselves with cabbages, and at a given signal threw

them on the stage. Edward Terry, with great insouciance, picked one up, saying, "As I am a sinner, I'll have this for to-morrow's dinner." But the ladies got their share of bouquets you may be sure. Oh for a few of the old Burlesques again! Stage effects were not so advanced or elaborate as they now are, but the performers were in no whit inferior. Could any Indian girl have been more fascinating than Kate Bishop as Minehaha in *Military Billy Taylor*? My earliest recollections of the stage are seeing Fechter in *Monte Christo* when he appeared at the Adelphi in 1869, and some of the stage effects were considered wonderful. We seem to rely too much now on such garnish.

In a very unsavoury quarter, St. Mary's Street, was a Music Hall. It was always spoken of as the 'Bell,' although its proper name was the more poetical 'Bluebell.' It was of the old style, with a Chairman, whose duty it was to announce the turns, and who sat surrounded by a circle of admirers who kept him supplied with drinks. At this time the chair was occupied by a well-known character, a Mr. Howard Harris, to the mob 'Oward Arris.' On some nights, in response to loud calls of invitation, he would oblige with 'John Barleycorn,' an immense favourite, the audience doing full justice to the refrain. Saturday was the great night, and sometimes furious fights took place between the *jeunesse dorée* and the citizens of the town. The former affected the circle on the first floor, which was approached by a broad staircase; the latter patronized the pit, and soldiers and sailors the gallery. A Sub once scattered a handful of pepper over the pit, with the result that an enraged and sneezing mob stormed the circle, which defended itself at the head of the stairs. It was a good strategic position, but numbers were beginning to prevail, and the circle was in danger of rout. A cry was raised of "Army and Navy to the rescue." Tommy and Jack, who had been watching the fray with great interest, did not need a second invitation, and came swarming down the pillars. With such a reinforcement the 'cits' were soon driven out of the premises.

Boxing had now become a highly popular recreation, and we all took lessons, our instructors being of that class now defunct, the professional pugilist. We had two worthies who rejoiced in the names of Tommy Truckle and George Baker; these excellent fellows put

quite a decent notion of the fistic art into one for the modest fee of a guinea, and many of us had occasion at some time or other to feel glad that we had a slight knowledge of it to fall back on.

As for the rowdyism, it was not, of course, very creditable, but it was the spirit of the times when prize fights were fought with the bare fist. Steam had to be blown off sometimes, so Saturday nights acted as the safety-valve, and we became normal again.

The music-hall performances may have been vulgar and not high art, but they did not rely on innuendo or veiled indecency for applause. Can the same be said now?

But soon most of us were weary of the fleshpots, and longing to go to sea again. To my great joy I was appointed early in July, 1869, to H.M.S. *Monarch*, and I quitted the unsatisfactory life of the *Duke* for one which I felt would give me more insight into the serious duties of my profession.

CHAPTER VI

THE *MONARCH*

I am Monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute.

THE above lines of Cowper illustrate the position which the fine ship *Monarch* held among her contemporaries. She was the first seagoing turret ship and a most imposing sight, heavily masted and a large area of canvas, an unqualified incumbrance. To prepare for battle all tophamper had to be sent down and the shrouds cleared away, the only remaining support for the huge iron masts being a solitary chain each side ; all this had to be done before we could go to quarters, and was no slouch of a job. Neither were the decks suitable for working the ropes. This conservative adherence to sail-power was largely responsible for the loss of the illfated *Captain,* to be referred to later.

With the wind at all free these ironclads under sail would make fair progress, but directly the wind hauled forward they became sluggish and crablike in motion ; they seemed to have less buoyancy than their wooden predecessors. Yet in a passage that we made coming home from the United States we attained a speed of fourteen knots under sail alone. It was blowing hard with the wind dead aft, and we were carrying all our canvas. Her progress was very stately, she did not roll much, and must have looked very like a half-tide rock.

On joining I seemed to have got into a new Navy ; a fine gunroom on the maindeck, a bathroom and chest-flat to ourselves, and a lot of modern improvements everywhere. Not the least of them was an experimental effort to light up the ship with gas. It was a signal failure. Who was the genius who got it installed? It must have been an expensive experiment, and my recollections are that it was very dim and emitted fearful stinks.

The ship had been commissioned at Chatham and was quite East-Country. There was a subtle difference between these men and the more simple West-Countrymen that I had been with. A scrap of conversation overheard by me may serve to illustrate. During an argument between two seamen gunners, one of them called the other "A damned Fool." "Oh! am I?" replied the other. "Now, what's radius?" The first man had to confess his ignorance. "Well, who's the fool now?" was the triumphant retort.

Again, a powerful and inexplicable odour prevailed on the forecastle one morning that baffled investigation. A man in my hearing remarked to a companion, "Do you twig the Effluvia?" "Effluvium," corrected the other. "You've been reading the Court Guide," returned his friend.

I found myself at school again, but our pedagogue was no more competent to control us than the previous one, he was much too soft and kind-hearted; he was near the end of his service, and in our eyes quite aged. He had a bad habit of spluttering when he spoke to you, which—to put it mildly—was unpleasant. It was particularly noticeable one day, so on the following morning we all appeared in waterproofs! One morning he arrived beaming, and informed us that his wife had presented him with a baby, upon which one of the crowd said, "Good Lord, Sir, who do you suspect?" This was a bit too thick, and the offender spent a *mauvais quart d'heure* in the Captain's cabin.

The *Monarch* was naturally a great show ship, for she was one of the earliest to be built entirely of iron. She had a belt of iron armour right round her, brought up over the stern, and also forward, to protect the secondary batteries. The armament consisted of four 12-inch M.L. guns, two in each turret, two $6\frac{1}{2}$-ton guns under the forecastle, and one of the same type aft as a stern chaser. The turret was moved by steam-power with alternating hand-gear, and she was fitted with a steam capstan. Her freeboard was about 14 feet, and there was a berthing of iron plates about three feet high abreast of the turrets, which was let down when the ship prepared for action, an uncommonly noisy operation.

She could steam fourteen knots at full speed, and at that her expenditure was 200 tons of coal per diem.

As the stowage was only 600 tons, a more economical rate had to be maintained. On our measured mile trials we nearly had a very nasty accident. An inquisitive yacht actually hove to right in our course to have a good look at the new ship, and nothing but the promptitude of our navigation officer averted disaster. We stopped the trial, and the Captain sent an officer on board to interview the owner. As the officer selected was one who was well qualified for such a job, it may be taken that the expostulations were more than mild. Sad to relate, an accident from the same cause did occur in 1875, when Her Majesty Queen Victoria was crossing from Osborne in the Royal Yacht. On this occasion a yacht was cut in half and sank immediately, and one of the ladies on board was drowned. Lieutenant J. R. Fullerton of the Royal Yacht jumped overboard in full dress and saved one of the party.

We spent a good deal of time in the dockyard ; something was generally going wrong with the works. As we lay alongside the jetty, we were constantly having visitors on board. Sometimes we used to show these people round, especially if there were any pretty girls among them, otherwise we handed them over to a bluejacket. Once while showing a girl (who came under the former category), and her father round the ship I drew somewhat on my imagination, and attributed marvellous qualities to some of the internal arrangements. Never were there so many inventions collected in a warship before. My audience was most receptive, especially the parent, who, when they parted, presented me with his card. I looked at it and found that I had been practising my persiflage on a retired Admiral.

At last we were considered fit to join the Channel Fleet, and off we went to Portland, where we found those good old standing numbers *Agincourt, Northumberland, Minotaur* and one or two others. The three mentioned were the five-masters so well known in the Service. The mast and yard cult was still in full swing, and they made excellent gymnasiums ; the drill served to keep the men healthy and active. Swedish drill does that now, but it does not inculcate such daring as the work aloft did.

About this time the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Childers, resolved to go for a cruise in the combined Mediterranean and Channel Fleets. I think he went as

a sort of Admiralissimo. He was the man who brought out the order that beards and moustaches might be worn. It is to be presumed that when not seasick he was rather a trial to those on board the *Agincourt*, which was the ship he embarked in, but the average N.O. knows very well how to put up 'smoke screens,' to use a modern simile, and judging by some letters which appeared in *The Times* about that time over the pseudonym of "Greening" and purporting to be written by a midshipman, he must have acquired some priceless information with regard to the Navy in general. During this cruise we had some sailing trials (Ye Gods!) with the *Hercules* and *Inconstant*, to show the First Lord what clippers we had in the Service.

The cruise at an end, without much regret we parted brassrags with the Mediterranean Fleet and the First Lord, returning to Portland and the routine of previous days. Our Rear-Admiral, A. Eardley Wilmot, was an eccentric, and among other things did not like to see officers going ashore in plain clothes, so set an example by making his coxswain take a bag that contained his mufti, and the gallant officer shifted on the beach. In these times he would probably be run in for indecency. It used to afford the officers on duty much amusement to watch the process with their glasses. The Commander of one of the ships was very fond of hunting; he would dress himself in hunting kit, conceal it under a waterproof, and after evolutions, nip into a boat and off to the chase. What a diversity of characters one did meet! We had two youngsters in the mess, of whom one never read anything but Dickens; I think he knew most of *Pickwick* by heart, and the other was so universally well informed that he could generally put a name to any quotation we tried him with, and we often tested him.

In November, 1869, that distinguished philanthropist Mr. George Peabody died, and Her Majesty Queen Victoria determined to honour his memory by sending his remains to the United States in a British warship. The ship selected was the *Monarch*.

Behold us, then, one wet and cold afternoon in December, embarking the coffined remains at Portsmouth with all due ceremony. The ship, masts, boats and yards, in fact everything in sight, with the exception of the hull, was painted French grey, described by the papers as naval mourning, on what grounds is not clear. A ribbon of the same colour was painted round the hull.

The Captain's after-cabin had been converted into a mortuary chapel, entirely lined with black cloth. It was dome-shaped, with white silk cords radiating from the centre and looking up; round the upper part of the sides, festoons of cloth fringed with deep white lace. Round the sides, at intervals, were silver monograms. G.P., wreaths of immortelles and silver brackets with double waxlights. The deck was covered with black cloth, and in the centre was a catafalque on which the coffin rested; on either side of it stood four massive silver candlesticks. The effect was very striking, and it was hard to realize that you were on board a ship. Visitors were allowed before the body was embarked, and many thousands took the opportunity.

Mr. Peabody's remains were embarked with a great deal of pomp and circumstance, and were placed temporarily in a pavilion on deck. The ship then proceeded to Spithead, where the U.S.S. *Plymouth*, sent over especially from America, was waiting to act as escort. After anchoring, the coffin was removed to the mortuary. The weather was so bad that the ships did not get away until the 20th, and they arrived at Portland, Maine, on January 25th, after an uneventful voyage via Madeira.

During the passage our Captain, Sir John Commerell, V.C., who was a most hospitable man, frequently asked the Captain of the *Plymouth* to dinner. The latter did not apparently enjoy the boatwork that this entailed, for at length, in reply to an invitation that he received, he signalled "If I were a Captain in your Service and senior to you, I should think you were trying to make a vacancy." This put an end to the dinners. Captain Macomb of the *Plymouth* did not smoke, but he enjoyed a cigar by chewing it; I never saw him finish one, but he generally consumed the greater part of it with apparent enjoyment.

During the voyage Christmas came along, and as there was a nephew of the philanthropist on board, it looked as if we should have to curtail our celebrations; however, he informed the Captain that he did not think the presence of the body on board ought to interfere with any festivities or general amusements, so things went on as usual, and even the band played in the evenings. It transpired that this relative was not a beneficiary under his uncle's will. Many people believe that the presence

of a corpse on board is disliked by the men; on this occasion there certainly was no feeling of that sort. Sailors are popularly supposed to be superstitious; my experience does not support this theory. Judging by the number of mascots seen at the present time, it is the civilian element that deserves that distinction. But they do not seem to bring immunity to motor-cars or aeroplanes!

When the body had been disembarked (of course very ceremoniously), the ship became normal again and the proverbial hospitality of the American nation was extended to us. Maine was even then a dry State, and at a banquet given by the Mayor, Adam's ale was the sole beverage. His Worship only proposed one toast, remarking that the liquor was not conducive to festal amenities, so he would confine himself to asking us to drink to our 'Friends over the Water.' The dinner was given in an hotel, and we afterwards adjourned to a private room, where drinks of all sorts *ad libitum* were provided. In such a manner can unpopular legislation be evaded, even by a Chief Magistrate!

The *Monarch* was thrown open to the public and was visited by thousands, most of them expressing unbounded admiration. Our most distinguished visitor was the poet Longfellow, whose visit is one of my most treasured recollections. He spent some hours on board, and most of us had an opportunity of conversing with him. In addition to Longfellow, we were gratified and honoured by a visit from the famous Admiral Farragut, the Nelson of the United States, who distinguished himself in the Civil War while in command of the Federal Fleet. We were invited to visit New York, but the Admiralty refused permission, softening the disappointment by sending us to Annapolis, Chesapeake Bay, where the Naval Academy is situated. Before leaving we gave a dance on board that was largely attended.

We arrived at Annapolis on the 17th of February, 1870, and remained until the 5th of March. Trips to Baltimore and Washington were among the hospitalities extended to us; a ball at the Naval Academy, and a great deal of private entertainment made the visit still more enjoyable. The Naval Academy was extremely interesting, and it was evidently run on very sound lines, the administration and discipline being most thorough. Our prevailing opinion was that the cadets got a most

excellent education ; one of the best; but at the expense of practical experience afloat, for they did not go to sea until the age of eighteen to nineteen, and then as Ensigns.

Crowds visited the ship, and the debris left behind was extraordinary. It included on one occasion fourteen empty purses and a woman's petticoat. The celebrated General Sheridan paid us a visit, and we had the band out to play 'Marching through Georgia,' which pleased him very much. He lunched with the Captain, who had a party on board to meet him ; while they were being conducted round the ship a number of people entered a cabin in which a cold lunch was spread out, and it is to be presumed either that they thought it was too good an opportunity to be lost, or that the Captain was a very hospitable man, for they seated themselves, and the steward, thinking they must be the guests, served them with lunch. When the Captain's party arrived you can imagine what consternation was caused.

General Sheridan noticed a certain Captain Brown on board who in the Confederate Navy had played a prominent part in the Civil War ; he turned to Commerell and denounced the man as a rebel, and concluded by saying that there was no room on board for both of them. It must have been a bit awkward for his host, but such was his tact and diplomacy that he finished by getting them both into his cabin, where they had drinks together. He influenced Sheridan by saying that the *Monarch* was British soil and that everyone met on equal terms.

Commerell completely won over all the Americans with whom he was brought in contact. A most urbane man, he had among other rare qualities the art of listening attentively while others talked. One of our visitors remarked to me that he would make a most acceptable Ambassador at Washington to adjudicate upon the *Alabama* claims. These claims—as usual—went against us. What an immoral nation we are ! We were mulct to the tune of over three millions, which left a handsome balance when all claims had been satisfied. Of course, it was not returned. What a complaisant nation we are !

The festivities wound up with a big ball at the Naval Academy, and we departed feeling that nothing could have exceeded the cordiality of our welcome. No un-

toward event had occurred, as had been feared by some. One of our visitors expressed his anxiety about this to me in the course of conversation, remarking that he would feel relieved when he had sailed. I asked him the reason for so curious a statement, and he replied that he feared some of their Toughs might try to blow up the ship. The fact was that the Slidell and Mason affair had not been forgotten, and the North still felt rather sore against England. It was one of the few cases in which the British Lion resented having his tail tweaked. Another thing was very evident, namely, that the ill-feeling between the North and South had not yet died out. It was more on the side of the South—the conquered side—than on the other, as we found. With another generation this feeling must have disappeared.

We arrived at Portsmouth at the end of March, and immediately went to our old billet in the dockyard, our gun-mountings giving trouble.

We had now a rival in the *Captain*, likewise a sea-going turret ship ; she was commanded by Hugh Talbot Burgoyne, V.C., my Captain in the *Constance*. Both ships were ordered to get ready for competitive trials. One morning I saw in the paper my appointment to the *Captain*. I went to Commerell and asked him to get it cancelled ; he pointed out that evidently my late Captain wished to have me with him again, and that I should be foolish to lose the interest of such a rising man. However, I persisted, and the appointment was cancelled. The next time Captain Burgoyne came on board he reproached me for being unwilling to serve with him, quite good-humouredly, but it made me feel rather cheap. I never saw him again, for the *Captain* capsized on the night of September 6, 1870, and only eighteen men out of a crew of 497 were saved. The designer of the ship, Captain Cowper-Coles, R.N., went down in her. Several late ' Constances ' were on board, and no doubt their fate would have been mine also. We none of us liked the look of the ship, and sometimes in chaff called her the ' Coffin ' from her unusual appearance, but we little thought how prophetic the title was. Had she not been so heavily masted the catastrophe would not have occurred, for her freeboard was very low, only five feet.

This dockyard work was not very educational, and another mid and I were sent to the training Brig *Martin*

for a course of instruction in seamanship. It was just yachting in a Service ship. We went out of harbour every Monday with a fresh batch of boys from the *St. Vincent,* and cruised until Friday evening, when we returned to harbour ; the week-end habit had already begun. There was a standing complement of seamen on board and we soon got the boys into shape. On one occasion we beat through the Needles (on a weather tide) ; quite a smart affair.

On the 10th of August came my examination in seamanship. The questions asked me would flabbergast the modern midshipman as much as some of his would me. Thanks to the age and rank of my examiners, they referred entirely to wooden ships, masts and yards throughout. I will only weary the reader with one of the questions which was by the way of being rather a stock one. It was, " As officer of the watch in a liner sailing with the fleet closehauled, line ahead, what would you do if a man fell overboard? " Such a case had obviously never come under my experience, nor was it likely it would, but it had to be answered. I was for hauling up the courses, throwing everything aback, and making a sternboard, which ought to bring the ship into a favourable position to windward of the man. Of course, lowering the lifeboats in the interim. Two of my board were for it, the other wanted to ' Go About ' and ' Leave the mainyard square in Stays.' Of course, they argued it out and wasted precious time, thereby saving me from a lot more questions. When I was called in again it was to receive a second class, which I honestly believe would have been a first but for that unfortunate question. The next day I joined the College.

The College is an ancient building in the dockyard ; the cabins—they can scarcely be called rooms—were small, but the mess was quite good. We studied according to our inclinations ; unless going in for a first-class, the object was to do as little as possible, just enough to get a pass. The fashion was to have lodgings outside in which we spent the week-ends ; most of these lodgings were in Chapel Row, at the back of the College. The examination was rather a farce, especially in the section which was known as ' Winds and Currents,' in other words Hydrography. The candidate who was best up went in first, and on coming out handed to the porter a list of the questions, which the latter individual slipped

to us, we being herded in a room in order to prevent such a contingency, but the authorities overlooked the potency of the 'silver key.'

Having passed the ordeal of navigation, we went on to the more congenial one of gunnery, and for preparation of that took a course in the *Excellent*, the gunnery school. This was a very different affair, as we were under the eyes of the Staff, and were subject to strict discipline.

A tribute must be paid here to that extremely well-managed institution, the gunnery school of the *Excellent*; it indeed lived up to its name. Everybody seemed to be actuated by an untiring energy and desire to learn, they received every encouragement, and the instruction was thorough. The Staff—well we know what Staff-officers are, and these were no exception—was of high ability. Of course, people in such a position have to be a little haughty and aloof; it would be impossible to know all of the officers continually passing through, yet they occasionally unbent, and we found them good fellows and plain N.O.'s, like ourselves. The men instructors were an admirable and efficient class, a little too parrot-like in their detail of drill perhaps, but very smart in practice. When passing through later, as a Lieutenant, these men were very fond of showing off. One of them apostrophized our squad in the following manner: "Gentlemen, really that wheel was worse than the Garde Mobile," and again we were informed that our skirmishing would discredit the Francs-tireurs! This was in 1870.

After the above I joined as a full-blown Sub, but early in 1871 Commerell left us to take the post of Commodore on the West Coast of Africa; several of the 'Monarchs' went with him, and all this, combined with the monotony of the Channel Fleet, began to make me desirous of a move also.

I wrote to a friend of mine at the Admiralty, asking for an appointment to a ship on a foreign station, a small craft for choice, for I wished to study the Service from the standpoint of such a life.

We missed Commerell very much; he was such a thoroughly brave, unselfish, humane man. As his Aide (or 'Doggie'), I had learned to revere him. The following is one of the many instances of his coolness: I was standing by him on the bridge while we were at sail drill, and owing to the yard-rope parting the mizen top-gallant yard came down by the run, it cleared him

literally by an inch or two, and then plunged overboard. He looked at me with a twinkle in his eye, and said, "A close shave that!" Yes, I thought, another inch and you would never have had a shave of the other sort.

My station in action was at the voice-tube on the bridge; it communicated with a central one below from whence the orders were distributed, and at which a great pal of mine was stationed. I am afraid that in our leisure moments we so far forgot ourselves as to exchange ribald jests and badinage. It sometimes took the form of what schoolboys call 'Sells.' On one occasion he called up, "Have you heard that Jacky has broken his leg?" (Jacky was the name we had for Commerell.) As it happened Jacky answered it himself, having despatched me with a message. Being very prompt, and no doubt curious to know how he could have incurred this accident without being aware of it, he disguised his voice and said, "How?" "By trying to scratch his ear with his big toe." The Captain was too kind-hearted to bear malice, but although he forgave it, I doubt whether he forgot, and from what I knew of him he had many a hearty chuckle over it.

On the 26th April, 1871, my appointment to the *Plover,* a gunvessel of three guns, appeared. It transpired that she was on the 'North American and West Indian' station, and was to be recommissioned at Bermuda, whither the new crew was to be conveyed in the troopship *Himalaya.* During my last few months we had spent most of the time at Portland; the Franco-German War was still on. Several German ships were in refuge there, and it was notable how these ships flaunted their flag when a French cruiser came in, as often happened. Our sympathies were entirely with the latter, and the result of the war filled most of us with uneasy forebodings as to the future, for it was evident that Prussia was intent upon becoming a Great World-Power. With the assistance of Austria, she had despoiled Denmark, and then with consummate treachery had turned and rent her quondam ally; now France lay at her feet, the last achievement having brought about a united Germany. One felt "Whose turn next?"

A few days after my appointment, the Commander sent for me and introduced me to my future Captain, who seemed to be an agreeable man, and with whom I had some conversation. At that time I had what may

be described as a Shakespearian cult on me (I freely interlarded my speech with his expressions), and in after-times he told me that he thought I was one of the most extraordinary youngsters he had met, but that when I left, the Commander reassured him by saying that I was quite normal, rather high spirited, and a promising young officer, adding that I required sitting on occasionally. I quite realize now that I did.

The occasion being propitious, I asked for leave, and got it until I had to join the *Himalaya*. With very deep feelings of regret at leaving my messmates, with whom I had spent so many happy hours, I bade farewell and hurried off home to spend the rest of my time with my people.

One incident on leaving gratified me. We had a Greek officer who had been sent to us for instruction; his name was so like Gorgonzola that he answered to it from the first. Taking pity on him, I gave him lessons in the English language (good, not bad), and on leaving he pressed into my hand a case of meerschaum pipes. We used to have quite a variety of foreigners attached to us, Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, Chilians, Turks, and Japanese, mostly good chaps, even the Turk. Two of the Japanese were in the flying squadron, and one committed 'hara kiri' in the presence of the midshipman and corporal of the watch, who were going the rounds; it nearly scared them to death. He was very backward, and could not get on, which drove him to this foolish act. When his companion was asked as to the disposal of the body he shrugged his shoulders and said, "Throw it overboard."

CHAPTER VII

THE *PLOVER*

Of all the ships upon the blue
Not one contained a better crew.

THUS W. S. Gilbert, when he created that erotic phenomenon the *Mantelpiece*. Would that the lines were applicable to the craft that I now have to write about, but candour compels me to admit that it was not so, and it is of no use for me to attempt to paint her in brighter colours than deserved, for the reader would soon discover blemishes that would damn it as an accurate portrait.

The voyage out in the *Himalaya* was uneventful. We had crews for the *Danaë*, *Niobe* and *Plover* on board. Idle hands always discover mischief, and in this case it took the form of gambling, and for me it was a lesson never forgotten. Modest points at whist, later bridge, with a brief period of limited loo, was all that I ever indulged in for the future. Gambling was not a popular vice in the Navy during my time ; it was sporadic and usually confined to a clique of moneyed men, with, of course, the usual earthen pot, that either came to grief, or through sheer good luck, combined with skill, floated with the rest. At Plymouth I recall a remarkable case, that of a Lieutenant who won a large sum of money from a soldier officer, which the latter was unable to pay. A compromise was arrived at by which it was arranged that he should pay an annual sum ; the next year the former was drowned while boat-sailing. It is an unsatisfactory manner of making or losing money, to put it mildly.

When we arrived at Bermuda the *Plover* was inside the Camber, and had not finished her refit, which meant that instead of finding the ship all ready for us, we had to commence with only a partially refitted one, and as we were wanted for service in the Bahamas the order was

'Hurry up.' The result was that the work was not well done, and our troubles commenced from that date.

The *Plover* was a double-screw gun-vessel of 660 tons, and 160 horse-power; the engines had been taken out of old gunboats, a very economical idea, but not conducive to efficiency. We soon found out that she would neither steam nor sail; under the latter she carried such a tremendous amount of weather helm that we could never set the spanker. You could never rely on her tacking, and to add to it, the masts raked so that all the leads of ropes chafed somewhere. These craft used to be called 'Bugtraps,' possibly because they became infested with cockroaches in the tropics.

The Commander had been nearly four years on half pay; he was not thirty years old, having been promoted at the age of twenty-six. He had been a Flag-Lieutenant, and received the 'hauling down' promotion that Admirals were entitled to in those days. This patronage was very judiciously abolished, as well as the power that the Admiral had of filling vacancies, created by deaths of officers, with officers from his own flagship. Sometimes very good men got the step, sometimes otherwise; unfortunately our man was one of the otherwise.

A member of a wealthy family, he had been accustomed to be denied nothing, and had no self-control. His temper was ungovernable; this, added to his lamentable ignorance of sailoring, were the primary causes of the general discomfort and inefficiency that prevailed. On the other hand, his manners, on ordinary occasions, were charming, and he was generous and hospitable to a marked degree.

In the mess we were a happy family, and remained so until the end of the commission. It consisted of a Lieutenant, a Sub, a Navigating Sub, an Assistant-Paymaster, and a Surgeon. Outside in the steerage was a diminutive engineers' mess, which contained three engineers. This in a gun-vessel of 160 horse-power.

The Lieutenant was easy going and of undoubted ability. He would have done well under other circumstances; as it was he soon had enough of it, and got invalided, much to our regret. My chief recollection of him is that he used to lie on his back in his cabin and play the penny whistle, letting affairs slide. The new man was full of energy and zeal, but it evaporated, and he exchanged into the flagship. When the third man joined he proved to be an exceedingly pleasant, amiable

fellow, but he had one fault, he was rather too fond of the juice of the grape. The Captain discovered him one day a little the worse—or better—for his failing, and from that time had him completely under his thumb.

At last we were ready, and hustled off to Nassau, Bahamas. On our way we experienced very bad weather ; it blew hard, and the laniards of the lower rigging, being new, stretched so much that we had to ' swift in,' a difficult operation with the ship rolling heavily.

Nassau has a beautiful harbour for small ships, and is absolutely secure. It was a resort for Buccaneers, and the remains of a fort which they built show that they considered it worth defending. Here they could careen their ships and carouse in safety. We rode out a most devastating hurricane while there. There is, however, a very nasty bar to be crossed before reaching this haven of safety, and just before we arrived a boat from a warship was capsized on it, with the result that an officer was drowned.

The people were charming. The Americans had discovered the place, and came during the winter, which is a delightful season ; this added to the prosperity of the town, but its glory had really departed from it with the cessation of the American Civil War. During that time it had been used as headquarters by the blockade runners, and we heard great tales of the harbour being packed with ships, and the revelry that prevailed. The ribs of one of the runners lay outside the harbour on the beach for all to take warning by. It was the result of her Captain's drunken folly. Having got outside, he thought he would return for ' Just one More,' and in coming in he succeeded in successfully hitting off the bar—not the bar he intended.

With the close of the war these gentry vanished, and now only an occasional freighter, sponge schooner or fishing-boats are the habituées. During our stay an occasional Spanish gunboat would arrive, for Spain was blockading Cuba at that time, and had a large number of craft on that service. It was also a great place for sponges and pink pearls.

The Governor was a most hospitable man, and entertained us constantly. He was a great gourmet, and used to write fascinating little notes of invitations to his banquets. Before we had been there a month he took it into his head that he ought to visit his kingdom, which

embraced the other islands, so he embarked in us with his A.D.C., and we proceeded to make a tour that included all the islands of any importance, such as Abaco, San Salvador (Columbus' land fall) and Turks Island. The navigation is intricate, for currents are very strong and uncertain, and it certainly requires no ordinary precautions to avoid the numerous shoals and reefs that abound in these waters. We got some rough shooting at most of the islands, and Turks Island is memorable to me as the only time I ever killed a snipe right and left.

These visits were very amusing. The few white people seemed to belong to another age. Of course, they always wore their best clothes to receive the Governor, and everything was most ceremonious. All the negro population mustered to see the 'Gubnor.' "Which am de Gubnor?" cried an excited darky. "De red man," replied another. "Huh, there's two red man," said the first. "He's de man wid de clean behind," was the answer. By way of explanation, both the Governor and our Captain were red-headed and red-faced men, but while our man wore his hair fluffy, the other was cut very short.

These islands did not use coal. One young girl wandering round the ship spied some in an open bunker. "What is that?" she cried. "Coal," was the reply. "What *coal!* real *coal!* oh, do give me a bit." It is related of the same unsophisticated child that on her first visit to Nassau she saw a pony and exclaimed, "Lord! what a big dog!"

The Governor appeared to enjoy his trip, and not to mind his cramped quarters, for he persuaded the Captain to take him on to Havana, which was not on his beat. We spent a very pleasant week there, but it struck me as being a most unhealthy and ill-kept city with grand possibilities, as indeed it had, for the Americans developed them later and made an immense change in it, after driving out the Spanish. The latter, with their everlasting Manãna, seem to blight everything they put their hands to.

While at Havana I witnessed a bullfight for the first and last time. During its continuance I felt disgust and shame at being a spectator at such a so-called sport. The only interesting parts were first, when the procession entered the arena headed by a fine band, the rear being closed by the Toreadors, to whom the Governor threw down the keys of the bullring, and secondly, when a

sufficient number of bulls had been killed a sort of tame one was let loose, and all the gamins of the town invaded the bullring to tease him, but the bull had much the best of it before he was penned again. It was very laughable while it lasted. We also saw some cockfighting that imbued me with the same feelings of disgust.

Soon after our return to Nassau we were ordered to Bermuda to prepare for the winter cruise in the West Indies with the Admiral, and another gunboat came to relieve us, of course chuckling that they had escaped the cruise. Our Captain, for some unknown reason, elected to make the passage under sail; we took an unconscionable time, and incurred the Admiral's displeasure by arriving late. Here our new Lieutenant joined, and began to reform the ship, which included painting and scraping her, but he did not allow for the limited time at disposal, with the result that we went to sea in a piebald state. Further resentment!

The fact is that we were woefully undermanned. We could not furl all our sails together without sending Marines on the mainyard; they were—as usual—excellent men, and able to turn their hands to anything. Some time after one of them told me—as we were going through the Gulf of Paria—that the last time he went through it was as a bugler in a sailing brig, when he gave the time to the men who were sweeping her through it in a stark calm. It was a link with the past. We got into the Admiral's bad books, and I believe the flagship always kept our pendants bent on ready to hoist for us to repeat every evolution that was performed. In fact, we were always what Jack calls 'In the Tub.'

We bundled out of Bermuda with the rest of the fleet, a heterogeneous collection of ships from the *Royal Alfred*, the *Racoon* (a jackass frigate), four large sloops of the *Sirius* class, and four or five gun-vessels. The *Sirius* was ship-rigged, and one of the smartest ships I have ever seen. From lower yards and topmasts housed she could make all plain sail in a few minutes. Her First-Lieutenant, W. H. M. Molyneux, had a great reputation that he fully maintained as Commander of the *Achilles* later in the Mediterranean, when Admiral Sir Geoffrey Phipps Hornby was Commander-in-Chief.

We were cruising under sail, and we got lots of experience in keeping station. How one used to envy the flagship that led the weather line always under the

same canvas ; like an old swan at the head of the brood ; while we were constantly shortening and making sail. It was very healthy work, but what did it lead to? The cult of masts and yards was dying hard, but as long as we had sails they had to be used. Some distance off Barbadoes the Admiral got tired of us, and ordered us to proceed to Barbadoes under sail and get the ship painted (I have said that we went to sea piebald). We arrived off the island late one evening, and hove to for the night ; there was a strong trade wind blowing, and the next morning the place was nearly out of sight to windward. The Captain read the orders literally, and so for three weary days we beat up, tack and tack, and I believe that, like the Flying Dutchman, we should still be there but for a lucky shift of wind that enabled us to lay up for the anchorage. We anchored one evening and set to work the following morning. A few hours later the fleet came in, and we were still piebald. I don't know what the Admiral said to the Captain when he went on board to report, but I do know what the latter *looked* like when he came back.

Mindful of my old friends I looked them up and was enabled by their usual hospitality to spend a pleasant time with them. However, our stay was very limited, and we were soon off again under sail, outer ships first. We had an inshore billet, and commenced by going stern first into a large American schooner. Our mizen rigging fouled the foremost rigging of the Yankee ; it held us, and helped to pay us off, but the Captain, not noticing this, ordered some men aft to cut away the schooner's rigging. The American Captain jumped on to the gunwhale flourishing an axe and dared them to do it. While the men hesitated our ship paid off, and we got clear without further mishap. In the meantime the flagship was fairly dressed with signals to us to 'Use more Dispatch,' accompanied by other nice little messages, so again we started badly. But why continue the painful subject? Enough to say that by the time we reached Jamaica the Admiral had made up his mind that he could do without us, and we were handed over to the tender mercies of the Commodore, who doubtless had orders to make things lively.

With secret joy we saw the squadron clear out of Port Royal. Whenever we anchored it seemed as if we had no luck, for up would go the pendants to 'Shift

Berth,' and so, while the other ships were snugly anchored and the officers and men going on shore, we were usually manœuvring about for a fresh attempt.

The cruise had been very enjoyable otherwise, and the fleet made a pretty picture at times, especially when we all beat into Fort de France, Martinique, where, as usual, we had to shift berth. This French island we found most attractive ; at that time it was the only place in the West Indies with a dry dock.

The Commodore acted up to his instructions, and we got plenty of drill, but as stated, the ship was under-manned, and we never could have attained more than the humble mediocrity that eventually crowned our efforts. He was a great boat-sailer, and we used to get a good deal of practice at it, and being my job it came as a pleasant interlude.

The garrison was still supplied by the West Indian Regiment. These men looked very picturesque in their Zouave kit. Nearly all were negroes, although there were a few mulattoes in the ranks. It seemed rather incongruous to see the officers on parade in the uniform of an officer of the line, and it rather spoilt the general effect. These men were not intellectual, and did not discriminate too well. The Commodore, being challenged by one of them, was refused the right of way ; in vain he explained to the man that he was Commodore de Horsey ; all the reply he got was, " I don't care if you are Commodore de Donkey, you can't pass dis way." This is the sort of sentry that we are told the Romans produced.

After a somewhat lengthened stay we received orders to go to Cuba. The Spaniards were still pursuing their policy of coercion, and were maintaining a blockade, in spite of which, the insurgents managed to get arms and ammunition from the adventurous runners. We went to Santiago de Cuba, passing into the harbour through the narrow channel that is commanded by the Moro Castle, afterwards brought into prominence by a gallant attempt on the part of the Americans during the war to block it by sinking a ship in the fairway. This was undertaken by an officer named Hobson, and only partially succeeded, for the Spanish Fleet came out under Admiral Cervera to meet destruction at the hands of the Americans under Sampson. A very gallant undertaking on the part of Cervera, for he went to certain defeat.

We found several Spanish warships in the harbour ;

one of them, a British ship that they had seized for carrying arms, the *Tornado*. The affair caused a good deal of a flutter at the time, but our Government climbed down ; perhaps with a nation like Spain they wished to be magnanimous, but it was rather galling to see this ship converted into a foreign warship.

It was difficult to realize that the island was in such an unsettled state. The bands used to play on the Prado, and the handsome Spanish and Cuban girls, attended by their beaux, were in great evidence. Some of these girls were very beautiful, but it is a mistake to suppose that they are all dark-eyed and with raven tresses ; on the contrary, many were quite fair. The Governor gave a ball, and we had an opportunity of dancing with the Senoritas, but conversation was limited. The officers were very polite, and among other things I asked if there was any shooting to be had. The next day I received a card from one of them. "If you wisha to go a 'huntin', come with me at five of the clock." Accordingly I went, and this sportsman shot everything with a feather on it that we came across, and they were all small birds, not a game bird did we see. No more 'huntin' for me.

We now received orders to go to Manzanilla. It appeared that a correspondent of a New York paper had penetrated through the rebel lines, although warned by the Spaniards that he would be arrested on his return as a spy ; this happened, and it seemed as if they had made up their minds to shoot him. He had appealed to the American Government, but they disowned him, saying that he was a British subject. It was strictly correct, for he was an Irishman and a Nationalist (if not more). In his extremity he turned to Great Britain, with the result that the *Plover* was detailed as above.

Off we went, and, after running the gauntlet of the blockading ships that were very persistent in their attentions, we arrived and anchored off the town. The Captain despatched me to inquire into the state of affairs, and after considerable trouble, during which it must be admitted that the Spaniards, if apathetic, were polite, the prisoner was duly located. He was in a great state of funk, and in very poor quarters, guarded by men who amused themselves by prodding him up with their bayonets.

He was unfeignedly glad to see me, and, whatever his sentiments were to us as a nation, he carefully disguised them from the individual. We were able to make

certain arrangements for ameliorating his condition as well as procuring a promise that he should not be summarily executed. It became my business to visit him daily, and I managed to get sundry necessary articles for him, smuggling up a revolver among other things. One morning I found the bird flown, and ascertained that he had been taken to Santiago. Off we went in hot pursuit, and as we passed the Moro a handkerchief was waved out of a window—it made me think of Sister Ann. The next day he was whisked off to Havana, and again we followed the long trail, only to find on arrival that he had been finally deported to America. He was a singularly forgetful soul, for at Manzanilla his gratitude was almost embarrassing, and he was never going to forget us, all of which we accepted with becoming modesty, but once back in the 'Land of the Free' all these fine sentiments evaporated, and we never had so much as a line from him. This gentleman, whose name was O'Kelly, actually became a Member of the British Parliament for some Irish division, and like all of them, annoyed the Government on every possible occasion. After all he was not as bad as Trebitsch Lincoln.

Like a homing pigeon the *Plover* returned to Port Royal, and we just got back in time for another job, so we began to think we were earning our keep. The master of a merchantman had come in and reported a rock off Isle de Vache on the south coast of Haiti. He probably saw a dead whale (if he had had his wits about him might have smelt it), or a ship, bottom up, or he might have been celebrating and have seen what was not there. Anyway, we were told off with another similar craft to go and hunt for it. Being some distance to windward and the trades very strong, we were compelled to steam to the supposed spot ; once there, the orders were to stand off and on under sail until we had spent a fortnight of thorough search or found it in the interim.

And a weary fortnight we spent. Most of us were wishing that we might bump on it, for it was dull work. In the winter months the trades are strong, and what with soundings and tacking every two hours the watch did not get much time off. At last we bore up for Port Royal, and then came an inspection by the Commodore, to prepare for which the Navigating Sub and I went to a ball given by some Spanish Jews at Kingston and did not get back until 7 a.m. As the inspection was at 9 a.m., we had

not much time to recover, but we worried through, and directly the Commodore left two very sleepy Subs turned in. It is not a climate for much dissipation, and we could easily have dispensed with that provided by the Commodore.

Either the report must have been favourable or the Admiral must have relented, for we were ordered up north. We called at Bermuda, and pressed on to Halifax, all sorts of anticipations stirring in our breasts, only to be dashed to the ground, for we were ordered away almost at once ; the C.-in-C. evidently did not want the ship in the harbour or ourselves at his garden parties. Our destination was Cape Breton Island, which we were to make our headquarters, and from thence to cruise round the Gulf of Newfoundland. After all, he did us a good turn, for it was a delightful cruise, and I look back to it with pleasure. We were constantly on the move, and visited some exquisite places, very little known to the ordinary tourist or the N.O.

One of our most delightful visits was to Lake Bras d'Or. We steamed into the little lake and came out by the big one. The scenery was most fascinating, and it was a very unusual occurrence for a warship to make such a trip.

Living in these parts was marvellously cheap, and the Mess profited thereby. At sea we got our fish fresh and cheap from the boats with which we communicated, stopping for that purpose. I once purchased a forty pound cod for five cents in this way. I suppose those days are over now.

Sydney, the capital of Cape Breton, was our favourite anchorage, and we got very friendly with the people. This island was populated largely by Scots ; some of them could only speak Gaelic, but all, high or low, made you thoroughly welcome when you passed their way ; they were simple kindly people. It is a great part of the world for sport ; good fishing and shooting, and in my time there were still bears in the woods.

A good many sheep are reared, and on landing at an unaccustomed spot, our Captain's dog pulled down and destroyed three sheep before he could be stopped. The owner was extraordinarily good about it, and would only accept—what appeared to be to us—a very small sum by way of compensation. A great deal of homespun material is made by these descendants of Highlanders.

Thus we spent the summer of 1872, and after an all too brief spell at Halifax, trundled off to Bermuda, going into the floating dock soon after our arrival. While in the dock the Boatswain came to me and asked me my advice as to getting out of the ship ; it did not surprise me, as the poor man did not have too good a time with the Captain. The fact was that he had taken his warrant rather late in life, and would have done better if he had refused it and gone out of the Service on pension. Now he was afraid of losing it altogether. He was not a smart man, but did his best ; was a decent fellow, and under other circumstances would have rubbed along all right. "Why don't you get invalided?" I asked. "There is nothing the matter with me, Sir ; a board would only reject me."

"Why not try for an exchange?"

"Who would be fool enough to exchange with me?" was his reply.

I thought the matter over, then I said, "Will you do what I tell you?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"Very well. What you have to do is to act 'Looney.' The first thing to do is to heave the log and report to the Captain that she is only going four knots, and ask if you shall make more sail ; then you must keep it up, as if you were really off your chump. Can you do it?"

He looked dubious, but finally agreed that it was worth trying. Telling him to make his arrangements carefully, I went below.

Soon afterwards I heard the Boatswain pipe 'Reelers' (having, I presume, thrown out a hint), after which he solemnly proceeded to heave the log. He then went to the Captain, who, as I fully expected, sent for me, the First-Lieutenant being on shore. "What do you think of this?" said the Captain. "Here's the Boatswain heaving the log in dry dock and reporting to me that the ship is going four knots!"

I assumed an astonished air and replied, "I think he must be mad, Sir ; he ought to be sent to hospital for observation." The Boatswain stood looking stolidly vacant while we continued to discuss him, until the Captain made his decision, which conformed with my suggestion. I got him off as soon as possible and let our surgeon into the know (he was a good sort), and engineered the rest, the Boatswain being duly invalided for dementia. He made a wonderful recovery on reaching home.

We received an acting Boatswain from one of the sloops. He proved to be a very smart man, and I gave him an outline of some of our troubles ; he listened attentively, and smartened up some of the men in a most unexpected manner, not strictly in accordance with the regulations perhaps, and he always waited until it was dark so that the 'striking' measures which he adopted could not be seen from the quarterdeck. After a time the few obstreperous individuals who set the fashion became quite tame. The Boatswain was stationed on the forecastle with me, but (like Nelson) I had to have a blind eye sometimes.

There may be some critics who will think that I acted wrongly in countenancing such a procedure as the above. I do not say that it was according to the Articles of War or the Queen's Regulations, but in a small ship like ours, where the discipline had grown very slack, peculiar measures had to be taken. One man in particular had been giving a lot of trouble. His example was beginning to affect others, and it was in the direction of this man that I wished the Boatswain to devote his energies ; he did so with marked effect ; we had no more trouble with him.

During the time the ship was in dock I found myself with a good deal of leisure time on my hands, and I got the First-Lieutenant to let me have a cutter, and boat-sailing became my hobby. I found a companion in a brother sub from a sister ship. We had some glorious cruises, and among the reefs he used to act as pilot, sitting in the bows and directing me which way to steer ; in those waters the reefs are very visible. A favourite run was to Hamilton. At the hotel there was a very generous concoction, for which Bermuda was celebrated, known as pepper punch. Once on a return voyage, whether it was the punch or not I do not know, but as he was gaily conning us a loud crash and a violent shock startled me considerably at the same time ; to my consternation, my companion disappeared overboard. Running forward, I found him hanging on to the bows, and was able to assist him on board again. He had gone down in deep water alongside the reef that we had bumped. My friend is now a distinguished Admiral, and we often talk over those merry times, and F. W. Fisher or 'Uncle Bill' is one of the best raconteurs that the Navy has produced, which is saying something.

In addition to boating and seining parties one put in a good deal of walking to keep fit. There was no lawn tennis or golf in those days. I became quite a pedestrian, and took up a challenge that I would not walk from Hamilton to Ireland Island under three hours, the time occupied in crossing ferries to be omitted. The distance is between fourteen and fifteen miles, no great feat, except that the climate is a bit of a handicap. I won the match, and a small stake, with time to spare.

The winter cruise came round again, and once more we were gathered into the fold. This time the flagship was generous, and spared us some supernumeraries, which made the work easier, and if not a success we did not get into so much trouble this time. However, we were again left at Jamaica.

The Fillibusters were still at their games at Cuba, and the notorious gunrunner *Virginius* was very active. She came into Port Royal hotly pursued by a Spanish cruiser, but doubled on her and escaped during the night. Although we knew of her nefarious designs, we were not able to detain her, for want of proof; moreover, she sailed under American colours, and was commanded by an ex-officer of the U.S.A. Navy.

At last she was captured by the *Tornado* and taken into Santiago. The Spanish authorities summarily executed fifty-three of the crew, among them the Captain and eight other Americans, also nineteen British subjects who had embarked under the impression that they were taking a passage to Costa Rica. More of these unfortunate men would have been executed but for the opportune arrival of the *Niobe*, Commander Sir Lambton Loraine, Bart., who had been hurriedly despatched by the Commodore. He promptly informed the Governor that the shedding of any more innocent blood would be the signal for him to sink the Spanish men-of-war lying in the harbour. This was a fairly plucky proposition, as there were four or five of them present, but he proceeded to place his ship in a position to make good his threat. This put a stop to the wholesale butchery, and the remaining prisoners, 102 in number, were delivered up.

The British and American Governments warmly approved of Sir Lambton's conduct of this affair, and on a subsequent visit to New York he was presented with a gold brick, and on it was engraved an inscription, "You're a Brick, and here's Another."

The same officer distinguished himself by his firmness in protecting British interests at Omoa, Honduras, during the course of which he bombarded the fort of San Fernando. For this service he also received the strong appreciation of the Admiralty. These instances are quoted as being among similar ones when naval officers are called upon to act upon their own responsibility ; unfortunately they are not always upheld. It was difficult for the authorities at home sometimes to realize how much depended upon the action taken by the man on the spot, conversant with the details of the trouble and prepared to deal with it. The wireless must have greatly altered such situations.

Our troubles were drawing to an end ; for late in the summer of 1873 we had to proceed to Bermuda again. This time it was trouble with the engines, and in such an indifferent state were they that we had to be towed there by the *Sphinx*, a five-gun paddler. We experienced our usual bad luck ; we were quite hardened to it now ; for within 100 miles of the island the tow-rope carried away in a hard gale. We had to struggle on as best we could, and after two days' buffeting crawled through the narrows into Grassy Bay.

The ship was taken into the Camber for a thorough survey, when it was discovered that she had a rotten stem in addition to engine trouble. The latter was patched up, and a goodly portion of the bow was filled with bricks and cement. She had literally become a composite ship! Always rather down by the bows, the additional weight forward made her still more so. Nevertheless, we were ordered home to pay off ; none of us looked forward with any pleasurable anticipations to the voyage home under such conditions, but anything to get home.

About this time an American warship came in, and when making a tour of the yard the Captain got into conversation with me, and learned our sorry state. On leaving he remarked, " I guess that even your smokestack only remains there because it is used to it." In fact, we used to get more chaff than sympathy over the rotten old tub.

We started in November, and luckily had strong westerly winds most of the time. A few days out we nearly had a terrible disaster ; it occurred in the evening, and there was a fresh breeze blowing with a fairly heavy sea. I was standing aft, and suddenly the officer of the

watch shouted out, "Hard-a-Starboard." I rushed to the side, and in a terrible turmoil of water, up rose the keel of a ship, bottom up. But for the promptitude of the Navigating Sub we must have struck her, for she was dead in our way, and in the rotten state of our bows we should have crumpled up like a ripe pear. I went up on the bridge, and we agreed that the ship had had a bit of luck at last.

More excitement came along a day or two afterwards. We were still running before the wind in a heavy sea when the wind began to take off, and we shook out a reef; while doing so, a man fell overboard from the topsail yard.

While we were hauling to the wind, in preparation to heaving to, the Captain called for volunteers to man the whaler, which we used as a lifeboat. It was a five-oared boat, but not fitted with air compartments. Being the only officer available, of course I had no choice, and when we got away from the ship and I had time to look round I found myself with five of the hardest cases in the ship. As we had been running dead before the wind, all I had to do was to pull to windward, so I steered accordingly. After a time—that seemed an age—I caught sight of the man every now and then on the top of a wave; on reaching him we found he was on the lifebuoy. The stroke oar, who was a most powerful man, lifted him into the boat, where he lay paralysed with fright. The trouble now was to turn round without being swamped, but we managed it, and then, to my consternation, could see nothing of the ship. However, after a time—another age—she appeared out of a rain squall, and we arrived without mishap. We got the man on board and the boat hoisted up (in pieces), and I went up to report to the Captain. He shook hands with me, saying, "I never expected to see any of you again." That was all we ever heard of it. It was hard on the men; they were volunteers, and if he had made application they would have received a life-saving medal; for my part I was only doing my duty. On another occasion it was my good fortune to rescue a man from drowning in Nassau Harbour; again the Captain was very profuse in his compliments, but it ended there. What made it more marked was the fact that a year after a man got the medal for a precisely similar act in the same harbour, the chief danger being sharks, of which there were plenty

at that time, but in the excitement of the moment one does not, of course, think of such things. It is with great reluctance that I mention these affairs, but my object is to illustrate how unfortunate a thing it is to have a thoroughly selfish man in command.

That, at least, is the lesson I learned, and I am glad to say that I never lost a chance of pushing a man's claim for recognition of a worthy and creditable act.

A few nights afterwards I had the middle watch, the most lonely and disagreeable one of all. The wind had died down to a stark calm, and there was no sea to speak of ; the ship was lying upright and motionless. It was drizzling, cold and dismal, not a very favourable setting for meditation, but there was nothing doing, and I was mentally rehearsing the event that I have described. At that time it is to be feared that my character was somewhat unformed and rather on the frivolous side, but I did *think* that the men and myself owed a debt of gratitude to Almighty God for our safe deliverance. I *know* it now. That it had been a very serious affair I fully realized, for directly the ship lost sight of us they began to raise steam and fire guns until, to their great relief, we appeared again. I felt elation, but I am afraid more personal than devotional. As I was musing the quartermaster broke in by saying, " Look aloft, Sir." I did so, and beheld a most extraordinary spectacle, one that is known among sailors of the uneducated class as " Corpse Lights," and by others as " Corposants," and finally by the more erudite as " St. Elmo's Fire." Each masthead and yardarm was ornamented by a luminous brush, tapering off, and several inches in length. In this instance they burned steadily and lasted many minutes—that is to say, until presumably the electricity in the air had become exhausted—for there is no manner of doubt that it is electricity and nothing else. But it is a weird spectacle, and I don't wonder at the ignorant seamen of the past being considerably awed and impressed by such an exhibition.

Without any more adventures we made Plymouth and found orders to proceed to Sheerness and pay off, which we did before the end of the year, and once more I spent Christmas at home.

While paying off I very nearly lost the number of my mess. I was going down to the ship on a very dark night, and most imprudently went through a shed that

covered one of the docks. Suddenly I felt myself stepping off into space—rather an uncanny feeling. When I came to I was on my bed and the Surgeon was attending to a bad cut on my head, the result of my fall down one of the slipways. I had got off cheaply, but had to lay up for a day or so.

This commission left an indelible impression on my mind, and many of the lessons learned served as a guide in the future. Among other things, how to make the best of limited resources, also the danger of slack discipline. I had never experienced anything like it before, and am thankful to say have never encountered it since. The lesson was unpleasant, but every cloud has a silver lining, and in this case it was our happy little mess.

CHAPTER VIII

THE *RALEIGH*

> He was a man of rare, undoubted might,
> Famous throughout the world for warlike praise
> And glorious spoils purchased in perilous fight.

My leave was terminated by an appointment to the *Raleigh,* at Chatham, where she was fitting out. Described as an iron frigate sheathed with wood of 22 guns, the largest of which were 68-pounders M.L., weighing 98 cwt., she was, in reality, intended as a fast cruiser. The complement was 560 officers and men. It was a relief to find myself back in a big ship after my last experience.

The crew was hulked on board the *Forte,* an old frigate. She was in the same category as the *Vengeance,* previously described ; perhaps she did not leak so badly, but it was great discomfort, and the ship was horribly cold and draughty. These circumstances were largely responsible for the death of one of the Lieutenants (the Hon. Basil Napier), from double pneumonia ; he was a strong young fellow, and made a great fight before succumbing. The son of a Scotch Peer, his people came South and took his body to Scotland for burial. This sad event cast a gloom over us, for he was universally popular, and would have gone far in the Service, as everyone who remembers the 'Bruiser' will confirm.

Our Captain was George Tryon, who afterwards went down in the *Victoria* on June 22, 1893, after being rammed by the *Camperdown.* Sir George, as he then was, was Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean. It was a terrible affair, and need not be referred to at length. My own opinion is that he intended his own line to circle round the other. This was in opposition to what was laid down in the book. The officers concerned took it literally, with the above disastrous result, and no dis-

credit can be attached to them. Freak departures from instructions and regulations as laid down should not be indulged in.

But he was a fine man, physically and mentally, and a good man to serve under. The Duke of Connaught, who was serving in a cavalry regiment, came to see the *Raleigh*, and Tryon remarked to him that it was a visit of the light cavalry of the Army to the light cavalry of the Navy. We were at that time one of the fastest cruisers afloat.

We had a well-known man as Commander, one of the very best ; he still adorns the Navy List as a retired Admiral of the Fleet, and is a V.C. He had the knack of getting the full capacity out of all ranks, and he never spared himself. It was a deep source of regret to all who knew him that his age prevented him from taking an active part in the war. This brief description does not do him justice, as all who know 'Tug' Wilson will admit. Since writing the above, this gallant officer has fallen a victim to a chill, caught while playing golf, and died after three days' illness, to the great grief of his numberless friends in and out of the Service.

By way of experiment the ship's company was fitting out the ship, and only the lower masts were in her when I joined. It was constant and very instructive work. When we crossed royal yards for the first time we felt very satisfied that she made a fine show.

We did not find Chatham very interesting, especially at that time of year ; later we were able to get some boating and cricket. On the Medway I learned to scull an outrigger, and experienced my first upset, luckily without bad results, but with a curious experience. I was capsized over a mud bank at high water ; on getting back to the ship I found that a valuable scarf-pin was missing ; I went back at low water and found it sticking in the mud.

Chatham, or rather Rochester, possesses one great object of interest in its old castle, which is well worth a visit, as is Dickens's house on Gad's Hill. For amusements I only remember a disreputable music-hall known as the 'Tin Can' ; I presume it had another name, but do not know it. It was rather rowdy, and a party of young military officers (one in particular) was rotting the performers ; at last one of the latter retaliated by saying to the crowd, that had become rather restive,

"Let him alone, his mother turns a mangle to keep up his commission." It was a brutal remark, and transferred our sympathies to the recipient, although he had been asking for trouble and had got it. These performers are particularly sharp at repartee. We thought we were in for a free fight, but there was nothing doing. It is to be hoped that the youth learned that you cannot play with edged tools without getting nicked.

The chief event I remember at this time is the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh to the Grand Duchess Marie, which took place on January 23, 1874, followed by their public entry into London a few weeks later. A battalion of seamen was sent up from Chatham to mount guard outside the Admiralty, and I went with a detachment furnished by the *Raleigh*. It was a bitterly cold day, and the snow lay thick on the ground. While we were waiting for the bridal pair a group of Staff Officers came riding along, and some irreverent youths snowballed them vigorously, much to the general amusement, in which the Staff did not share. It was very trying waiting in such cold, and the Guards, who were next to us, took pity on us, and invited us into the Horse Guards and stood drinks and cigars. After the procession had passed we marched to Somerset House, where the Admiralty provided a generous lunch, rather too much so in the liquor department, for when we marched to Victoria Station to entrain for Chatham the rear of the column was brought up by a cab containing several men who were incapacitated by drink from marching. As we were defiling into the station, through a rather dense crowd, a fascinating young woman caught hold of my arm and said, "Don't go on the sea to-night." It was a bit embarrassing, to say the least, but I brushed her off, amid the audible sniggers of the men.

I was nearly forgetting an object of interest in the *Resolute*, one of Admiral Sir E. Belcher's Arctic Squadron. She was abandoned by him, together with the *Intrepid*, in 1854, and made the North-West Passage on her own. The Americans found her in the Behring Straits in 1856, and later refitted her, sending her back to our Queen as a present. I believe she was shortly afterwards broken up. We are not a sentimental nation.

Early in June, 1874, the ship was in seagoing trim, had made all her trials, and reported ready. We received orders for the Mediterranean, with orders to call at

Plymouth on the way. On arrival, the first news I received was that I was promoted to Lieutenant. It was a disappointment in a way, for I should have liked to remain longer in a ship which we all felt was going to be a credit to the Service, as proved to be the case.

Thus my seagoing experience of the *Raleigh* consisted of a solitary trip from Chatham to Plymouth, during which we ran a full-speed trial.

I parted with my messmates with great regret. They entertained me with a farewell dinner, much to my surprise. I left the ship the following day, and reached my home that evening.

CHAPTER IX

HALF-PAY

Without employ the soul is on a rack; the rack of rest.

I HAD to anticipate a long period of half-pay, and I did not view the prospect with much satisfaction. Some people may like a rest, but as the average wait for an appointment as Lieutenant was eighteen months it was rather too long for most of us, especially those at all keen. A serious consideration was that it did not even mean half-pay in the strict sense of the word, for we only received the magnificent retaining fee of four shillings per diem. It was all very well for those who possessed any private means. No young man with any self-respect cares to quarter himself on his people indefinitely, and one or two had no home to go to. One of these actually shipped as an A.B. on board a sailing ship. At the termination of the trip the Skipper offered 'Geordie' (the name by which he was known) the post of Boatswain for the next voyage, but Geordie got an appointment.

It was an atrocious system, thoroughly bad and indefensible. All these officers should have been appointed supernumeraries in the fleet, for nearly every ship could have accommodated one or two extra Lieutenants and have been glad of them, while the Service would have benefited by increased efficiency. As it was, it created disgust, and some cleared out. Perhaps the Admiralty counted on that.

For three months I enjoyed—in modern parlance—a good time. Dances, dinners, boating-parties kept me going; for an unattached—even if not eligible—young man, who is always available, need not lead the life of a recluse. Then the usual reaction set in, and I became weary of leading a drone's life; besides,

I hated being asked what I was doing and having to explain that my profession had no use for me ; so I applied for a course of instruction at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, for there, at least, I would have the company of brother officers, and get the speech of the sea. An order came for me to join on October 1, 1874.

On arrival I found about forty other Half-Pays. Commanders, Lieutenants (a class of the latter qualifying for gunnery), any number of Subs (who came and went like the ghosts in *Macbeth*), and some Second-Lieutenants of Royal Marines.

At first we Half-Pays were full of zeal, but in most cases it soon oozed out. Nobody seemed to mind whether we attended lectures or not. We were on half-pay, and under obligations of a very limited kind, for the Admiralty only provided quarters and contributed toward our messing. We did not even wear uniform, and messed in evening dress. The mess was an excellent one, and you could always rely upon giving a friend a good dinner, also you could invite people to see the college, of which the painted hall and naval museum were prominent features, and well worth inspection. Greenwich is not a residential quarter, but there were lots of nice people in the neighbourhood. The celebrated 'Ship' and 'Trafalgar' Inns, so renowned for their fish dinners, were on the wane, their glory had departed. I think the trams had stopped people from driving down. But I recall one or two festive occasions, and there was certainly no fault to find with the menu or the wine. Some of us experienced the hospitality of the great city corporations, sumptuous feeds and balls at the Fishmongers' Hall, the Goldsmiths' and Tallow Chandlers' among them. Perhaps we were too young then to thoroughly appreciate the wines, but the after-effects did us no harm ; now that one is in the 'sere and yellow,' it seems to me that the converse holds good, and one regretfully passes the bottle.

The college periodical dances were well attended, and very popular. We finished off the term in a blaze of glorious hospitality by giving a big ball that was attended by over a thousand people. Some of them had not been asked, but I believe there is a class of people that does not let that stand in their way if they wish to attend a function that they believe will afford them pleasure.

We had a very good football team, and played some excellent fixtures, and in the Spring held an athletic meeting. One of the Lieutenants sportingly provided a pack of beagles, and some quite good runs resulted.

But London is too near and its attractions too fascinating for a college, especially with a convenient train service of every twenty minutes, and it would be far better for all concerned if it was in the heart of the country.

The great city had begun to preen itself. The embankment (a marvellous improvement to the riverside) had been completed and opened by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1870, and the underground railway was available, although not entirely finished. Vast improvements were effected by the construction of new streets for the easement of traffic, such as Northumberland Avenue, Charing Cross Road, and the widening of the Strand, to be followed later by Kingsway. The railway now ran into Cannon Street and Charing Cross. Efforts to improve the moral atmosphere were being made. The famous Argyle Rooms were closed, as were most similar resorts, the result being that the frequenters of such places were driven forth upon the streets. After the hour of 11 p.m. up to 2 or 3 in the morning, Piccadilly and the Quadrant were packed with a dense throng of men and women, kept circulating by the police, a phenomenon that explained itself to all but the most unsophisticated, and there were even some of that class in *those* days. Cremorne was closed about this time. I only paid it a solitary visit, and it did not impress me favourably, for evidently it was moribund. I did go in the daytime again to witness a parachute descent; the performer was taken up underneath a balloon that released him at a considerable height, when, to the horror of us all, the apparatus, which resembled a huge bird, completely crumpled up, and the unfortunate man fell and was killed instantaneously. The distressing part of it was that his wife was on the ground, and witnessed the whole occurrence.

Human nature is a difficult problem to tackle even for the London County Council, and in spite of well-meant efforts I fear London has not succeeded in becoming more moral, although it may be more æsthetic. Americans and Foreigners have told me that our capital city is one of the most wicked in the world. It may

be so ; the majority of the English would be the last people to become aware of it or admit it. Probably the police could throw some light on the subject. Vice cannot be stamped out by driving it from pillar to post, and what is wanted is more rescue-parties. It is the sort of work that women can and do undertake.

The theatres had made great strides in scenic effects and settings, and were considered rather wonderful by us ; now they are quite eclipsed. About this time I paid a visit to the Canterbury, a music-hall on the Surrey side. It had a novelty in the way of a sliding roof that moved on rollers and when open let out all the foul air and smoke. The attraction was Piteri, a celebrated dancer at that time ; she was a most graceful and finished performer. I only paid one visit to Evans Rooms in Covent Garden ; they were renowned for their suppers and a choir of vocalists, but I thought it a dingy place.

At the end of June we broke up, and I found myself in possession of a certificate for French, to which a wag had added 'Dancing.'

So home once more, but I soon after got a short course in gunnery in the *Excellent*. There were seven others in the class, and as we were on full-pay we had to conform to rules and regulations. Being newly hatched, we tasted the delights of a wardroom mess for the first time.

By Christmas, 1875, I was home again, and on the 22nd of January, 1876, my appointment to the *Indus* arrived. A glance at the Navy List told me that she was the guardship of the Fleet Reserve at Plymouth, a harbour ship. Making tracks for the Admiralty, I obtained an interview with the Naval Lord who made the appointments, but, although sympathetic, he told me I might "Take it or leave it," but that he would not give me another for some time in the event of my deciding on the latter course. It had to be 'Take it,' and I withdrew from the August Presence baffled and sore.

CHAPTER X

THE *INDUS*

But what are past or future joys?
The present is our own!
And he is wise who best employs
The passing hour alone.

I JOINED the *Indus* with a determination to make the best of it, and, if I could not get a seagoing ship, to participate in the pleasures of a harbour one. She was an old two-decker, and most comfortably fitted up for permanent occupation. My cabin was on the maindeck, and was large and airy with two portholes; all the guns had been removed. The wardroom was spacious and well furnished, the mess undeniably good. Most of my messmates were married men, and only lunched on board. Of course, they wanted a good lunch and got it. We got a good breakfast and dinner too. How the messman did it has often puzzled me.

We had over a thousand men on board, as we were continually entering stokers. At first they seemed to be always 'Swearing them In' outside my cabin until I got them moved on. As soon as they were 'Kitted Up' they were drafted to sea, thus getting no preliminary training, which was a bad system. In these days they get a good training and disciplining, and go to sea in a properly chastened mood. Formerly they were the toughest and most troublesome lot on board.

We also had about 200 Marines, who were putting in their time for pension; not one of these men had less than three badges and some four; they were a splendid lot. Some of them were distributed in the Reserve Ships as a guard. Part of the work of the Lieutenant on duty was to visit these ships, and it had to be done twice a week after 10 p.m. If the visiting boat was not hailed

and the officer got on board unnoticed, there would be ructions, but that did not often happen ; there was too much of the old soldier about these men. The officer had to visit three ships, and naturally, his choice fell on those nearest, unless it was fine weather and summer time and he did not mind a pull. For the guard-boat was a gig, the only steamboat ; a large harbour launch ; being reserved for the ship's work. The ships in reserve were many and various, and were moored from close alongside up to Saltash, and descended from a fine three-decker (that had never been commissioned) to an old frigate, whose lower-deck was so cramped that one could only stand upright between the beams. What a place for hundreds of men to live in! A naval curiosity was the *Icarus* sloop, that had done a commission in China under a certain noble Lord as Commander. She was painted yellow, as were the ships in Nelson's time. I imagine that the Admiral must have been rather a complaisant man. But Captains did indulge in freaks, notably the Captain of the *Harlequin*, who had his boat's crew in the rig of Harlequins. Others had their men in cloth jumpers, and another instituted red mess-waistcoats for his officers.

Our First-Lieutenant took a delight in trying to get on board these ships without being seen. He would pick out a dark night and steal up with his men rowing easy under the ship's stern, and if he succeeded he made off with the ship's solitary ensign so that next morning they had none to hoist. Then the unfortunate warrant officer in charge would be signalled to repair on board, and there were ' Wigs on the Green.' The rest of us did not quite sympathize with this.

Our duties were very light, and there were four of us to carry them out, so they only came every fourth day, except when one was on leave, which was usually the case, for in home waters we got six weeks' leave annually, whereas on return from foreign service a miserable fortnight per annum was the allowance. A strange anomaly.

All Service men know Plymouth and its lovely surroundings that have not altered since those days. The people were unbounded in their hospitality, and I don't suppose that they have changed either. In fact, as regards the social side, we could not have been better off, but professionally it was no training for a young officer ; however, I had not asked for it, and I made the best of my

opportunities. But I will not weary my readers with a detailed account of our gaieties. Yet an incident that occurred at a fancy-dress ball may be of interest. One youth went as a devil, very full in all details, horns and tail, the latter being loaded with quicksilver, that caused it to wave majestically, but it was a long time before he could muster up courage to enter the ballroom. A girl dressed as Eve (at least that was what she called it), certainly *looked* the part. All I can remember about the costume is that it had at least *one* big fig leaf on it, and that, like the girl in the song, 'Her golden hair was hanging down her Back.' She even had 'A naughty little twinkle in her Eyes.' My costume was that of Henry Quatre, and it was the only time I remember falling down ; my sword, worn in a frog, got between my legs and I took a severe toss. Luckily I did not involve my partner in my discomfiture.

We had a very crank little yacht belonging to the ship. I tried it once, and thought myself lucky to get back to the buoy. I did not like to croak, but felt that she was a dangerous craft, and so she proved to be when later one of the mess took her out ; for we got a signal that she had capsized off the Devil's Bridge, near Drake's Island. He was a married man, and shortly afterwards his wife came on board. She had to be told, and insisted on going out in the steam launch which we were despatching to the rescue. Off we sped, and at the Devil's Bridge I saw the mast of the infernal craft sticking up ; luckily she did not see it. After a good search we returned to the ship with dire forebodings. To our intense relief we found Hubby on board ; he had been picked up in the Sound, landed at Mill Bay, and taken in a cab to the dockyard.

Harbour ships were very good billets for married men, but married Lieutenants were rare in those days, and at first we had none, but before I left there were two Benedicts. I believe the married Lieutenant is no longer a *rara avis*. It was sometimes rather unpleasant when a young and charming woman insinuated that she wanted Algernon or Marmaduke on a day when he was on duty, and that you ought to take it for him. At last one became quite glib at inventing previous engagements. However, when all was well, we used to have quite nice family parties on board.

I never held with young officers getting married, and

acted up to my principles, for I did not marry until a Commander. So many men got too much married, with the result that they applied for 'Sloping Billets' and became regular 'Bundle Men,' of course finishing up with the Coastguard. When they were retired they realized, too late, that they had missed their tip. No man in a subordinate position can give the zeal and time to his ship, as demanded by our most exacting Service, if his thoughts and wishes are with the partner of his joys and sorrows—as they ought to be. I don't wish to convey an impression that all men in this category neglected their duty, for it would not be true; there were many who ran the double show successfully, but they must have had some bad moments.

A well-known officer (Commander of a big ship and devoted to his job to the prejudice of everything else) actually forgot himself so far as to get married. He went ashore in the men's dinner-hour, when, of course, there was nothing doing. He came off in time to set them going again. That night he was about to turn in, when his servant inquired whether he wasn't going on shore. "What for?" demanded his master. "Didn't you get married to-day, Sir?" "Heavens! so I did. Tell the officer of the watch to man my boat." History does not relate what the bride said to him on his tardy arrival.

Another wedding story may be inserted here. The bride arrived at the church rather late, and the bridegroom said something to her when she joined him, inaudible to the bystanders. When the parson got to the part that invites the bride to say whether she takes this man to be her wedded husband, she replied in a firm voice, "No!" As soon as the parson had recovered from this bomb he intimated that the party had better adjourn to the vestry, which it did. The bride was then invited to give an explanation, and she proceeded to do so. "You all know that I was late at the church," she said. "Well, when I arrived, my prospective husband turned to me saying, 'Why are you so late, damn you?' If a man will speak like that before marriage, what will he say after? I won't marry him." And she didn't.

We did not see much of our Captain. He lived at an hotel, being a single man. On the rare occasions that he did come on board he was very abstracted and odd in his manner. We strongly suspected—and events

proved the truth of our suspicions—that he was not quite right in his head ; but we liked him, and he was universally popular. Judging by the light of what occurred, he must have kept a very tight hand on himself. He would suddenly come on board, and after a few words with the Commander, perhaps ask him why he had come on board and what for. The latter, who was a tactful man, would suggest something, and he would adopt it with alacrity.

He enjoyed giving dinner parties, and he asked me to one soon after I joined. He greeted me most warmly, and we waited for the arrival of the other guests. After a considerable time he declared his intention of doing so no longer, and we adjourned to the dining-room, where there was a table laid for ten people ; the fact was, he had forgotten to ask the others! It was a weird affair, but a first-class dinner. We spent quite an enjoyable evening, and he even insisted on walking to the dockyard with me to see me off.

He developed further eccentricities, and finally what we feared happened. The Admiral sent for him to consult him on some Service matter, and on arrival he completely gave himself away by asking why he had sent for him, telling him that he was not the C.-in-C. and had no authority over him. The Admiral sent for the Fleet Surgeon, and rather a painful scene took place. He was taken off to his rooms, and in reply to the Admiral the Fleet Surgeon had to admit that he had suspected it for some time. "Then why have you not reported it?" said the former, to which the reply was, "That is quite another thing. One has to be careful when a senior officer is concerned." The other saw the force of that, and ordered a board to be held, with the result that he was placed under constraint, and then the poor man broke down utterly.

The doctor was quite right ; it is a most serious matter to confine a senior officer unless his malady can be fully established. A case in point is that of a Captain who sent for his officers and told them that he was Jesus Christ (this story being true, my readers must acquit me of irreverence), and that they were his Apostles, impressing upon them that one of them must necessarily be Judas, and that they were to discover him and hang him. It was a remarkable coincidence that there were just twelve of them. It was a serious situation, and was terminated

by the First-Lieutenant putting him under arrest with the concurrence of the doctor. A few days later the flagship came in, and the Lieutenant reported the affair to the Admiral, who sent his Flag-Captain to see the patient. They were old friends, and the Flag-Captain remained below for a considerable time. At last he came on deck, and as he went over the side he remarked in an audible aside, "No more mad than I am." It was a most uncomfortable moment for the Lieutenant and the doctor, who exchanged looks of consternation. In the meantime the Flag-Captain was pulling back to the flagship. Suddenly the patient rushed on deck with a revolver in his hand, and opened fire on his late guest and friend. Luckily his shooting was poor, and all his shots missed, but there was no more question as to his madness.

One of my most pleasant and interesting experiences while in the *Indus* was that of the annual fête, known as 'Flora Day,' at Helston, in Cornwall. A party of us went to stay with some people near Mullion, whence we drove over to Helston. A crowd of people came in from the surrounding district and etiquette was thrown to the winds, for anyone who wished took part in the floral dance with whomsoever he or she chose. We danced along the streets, in and out of houses, to music furnished by local talent. High and low, rich and poor, mingled without embarrassment, everybody yielding to mirth and enjoyment. Local customs like this are always interesting, and it is to be hoped that we shall never become too blasé to enjoy them.

Before quitting the ship I had an object lesson upon the folly of practical joking. We sent down an imaginary signal from the C.-in-C. to one of our number, asking him to dinner that evening. It was a full-fig affair, and after he had 'got himself up' and was going on shore, we undeceived him. It was a poor jest, but the C.-in-C. did not often condescend to mere Lieutenants, and we knew that the youth would buck about it, and so he had, for he had plenty of conceit. By the irony of fate a genuine invitation by signal came a few days later, but he was not to be had again. In the middle of mess came a signal, "The Commander-in-Chief is waiting for Lieutenant W. to complete his dinner party." Consternation on his part, which was succeeded by humiliation on ours, for the following morning two of us spent a most

uncomfortable half-hour at the Admiral's office, Mount Wise.

Early in July, 1877, our Commander was offered command of the *Condor,* a gun-vessel, to be commissioned for the Mediterranean station. He invited me to go as First-Lieutenant, and you may be sure that I was not long in making up my mind to accept.

CHAPTER XI

THE *CONDOR*

"I am so sorry to part with the crew of the *Condor*."

WE commissioned in July, 1877, and the next three weeks were very busy ones. Getting a ship ready required constant attention. I was visited one morning by a former messmate; we chatted for some time, and then he remarked, "I know that fitting out a ship is expensive work; let me lend you some money." His unexpected and generous offer very much moved me, but I declined gratefully and I hope gracefully. I thought of the two friends who held great arguments and differed on many points; one of them lent the other money, and his friend ceased to differ. At last the former cried out, "For Heaven's sake pay me back or contradict me." My friend and I never met again, for he was lost in the *Eurydice* the following year, but I have never forgotten Charles Vernon Strange and his kind thought; he was a rich man, but that does not detract from the deed.

The expenses of fitting out were heavy. It fell particularly on the executive officer, for the Government allowance of stores, especially paint, was absurdly small. It was the time when 'Spit and Polish' was in full vogue, and, given a man who could afford it, there was no limit to its indulgence. A friend of mine spent the whole of his pay on the ship. Our Second-Lieutenant, R. R. Neeld (now a retired Admiral), told me that he wished to help in some of the expense, so I asked him to look after the guns in order that he might get the credit for them. He did so in a most lavish manner, and no guns in the fleet looked better.

We arrived at Malta and filled up with stores for the fleet which was lying in Besika Bay, for the war between Russia and Turkey was in full swing, and our

diplomatists were, as usual, backing Turkey. We pushed on, loaded to the gunnel, and on arrival found Admiral Phipps Hornby in the *Alexandra* with the rest of the fleet. The Admiral gave us orders to weigh under sail three times a week for practice. During one of these cruises we stood in quite close to Mount Athos, and obtained a good view of its monasteries. It was across this Isthmus that Xerxes cut a canal in order to avoid the dangers of its Cape. These cruises were very good practice, and shook us into our places, besides teaching us what the ship could do. She proved a very handy little craft. Without being a pretty ship, she looked well; the bow was a straight one owing to the stem being fitted with a ram that could be unshipped. We had done this and left it at Malta, where it still is, for all I know. She was barque rigged, and the bowsprit was fitted to top up. A fair specimen of the whimsies of that period.

Besika Bay is an open anchorage that commands the entrance to the Dardanelles, but it is sheltered by the island of Tenedos to the westward. The fleet had been there some time, and quite a collection of huts and stores had been erected on shore. The ubiquitous Maltese had followed our fortunes, and it was possible to purchase most of the necessaries of life, and some of its comforts. There was a pack of hounds with which the wily jackal was hunted, and that gave good sport; this necessitated kennels and stables, for many of the officers had brought ponies from Malta. This part of the show was managed by a sporting parson of the *Raleigh*. There was shooting to be had, but the number of guns, especially on an off day, far exceeded the game to be found in the immediate neighbourhood; still, there was always an off-chance of something. Close by were the excavations of Troy, to which we all paid visits, for they were of intense interest, thanks to the work of Schliemann, the explorer.

After a time the Admiral despatched us to Beyrout, Coast of Syria, with orders to call at some of the islands *en route,* and in turn we visited Mitylene, Scio, Samos, Patmos, Symi, and Rhodes. The chief among these in the point of interest were Samos and Rhodes. The former possesses remarkable ruins, still traceable, among them a Temple to Hera. It was here that Antony and Cleopatra had a residence. It produces wine (of which Byron sings) and, of course, we laid in a store, and

that night at mess we complied with the Poet's invitation to 'Fill high the bowl with Samian Wine' with most pernicious results, for it gave us all colic! I have never had any confidence in a Poet's judgment of wines since. Did he get a commission? However, with a little advertisement, we were able to dispose of it later in the fleet, and suffered no loss. I suspect we were freely anathematized when its peculiar properties were revealed.

At Rhodes the chief object of interest to me was the old hostels in which the Knight Templars lived for over two hundred years, now mostly in ruins; typical examples of the paternal Turkish Government, apathetic of everything except the acquisition of money either by loan or robbery. Most of these hostels still retained, engraved on the lintels of the doors, the arms of the Knights who inhabited them, and it was particularly interesting to find among them the arms of the English Knight de Lisle Adam. At the mouth of the harbour are the rocks on which stood the Colossus of Rhodes. The Rhodians must have been of an ingenious and architectural turn of mind to erect such a monument that must have been of gigantic size to straddle the harbour's mouth.

The view from the anchorage at Beyrout, which lies in an open and dangerous bay, is a most pleasing one. Behind stand the mountains of the Lebanon, still partially covered with cedars, and away to the northward is the river Lycus, along the valley of which the 'Syrian came down like the wolf on the Fold.' He left momentoes of his visit, that are there to this day, in the shape of inscriptions on the cliffs that border the sea. We rode out to inspect these and its rock tombs.

The neighbouring country was in a turbulent state owing to the constant feuds between the Maronites and Druses, who hold very opposite views on religious matters. Consequently they enjoy nothing so much as murdering each other, and then the wily Turk steps in and impartially harrows both sides. On one of these occasions an English woman was carried off by the Turks, and put into a Harem. It was so long before her release was arranged that she refused to accept it, preferring to hide herself and her sorrow. We were informed that it was the custom for the English ships to supply her with papers, and we continued to do so, but I never saw her.

The Governor, Rustem Pasha, was an Italian who had embraced Mohammedanism. I made his acquaintance, and spent some very pleasant hours with him. He had travelled much, and was a great Shikari. During one of his trips he mortally wounded a bear that charged him. When he turned for his second gun he found that the bearer had fled; he drew his hunting-knife, and the bear closed and hugged him. After a desperate encounter he lost consciousness, and when he recovered the bear was lying dead beside him. Rustem got a terrible mauling, and bore the marks for the rest of his days. He was a bachelor, but one met many charming women at his house, for he was a great ladies' man. Many years after, at a Levee at St. James's, I caught sight of him in one of the side rooms, and made a bee-line for him. One of the officials stopped me with the query, "Have you got the Entrée?" "No, and I don't want it. Is it as bad as the Flue?" I replied. He smiled at my feeble jest, but I gained my purpose, and he admitted me into the room reserved for Ambassadors, and I renewed my acquaintance with Rustem.

There was also an Englishman of good position living in Beyrout who had married his niece; as it was not legal in England, they embraced Mohammedanism and settled down in Syria. They were very agreeable people, and appeared perfectly happy.

At Jaffa I had to content myself with the house of Simon the Tanner (the people in it must have thought us very gullible), and with what shooting I could get in the vicinity. The others went off to Jerusalem. There are some disadvantages in being a First-Lieutenant.

Our stay was not very long, and early in 1878 we were ordered to rejoin at Gallipoli. During our absence the fleet had passed through the Dardanelles, and the Channel Fleet had arrived to reinforce us.

Admiral Hornby was with his fleet up in the Marmora, and my old Captain, Sir John Commerell, was at Gallipoli in the *Agincourt*. Part of the Channel Fleet was at Saros, on the other side of the Isthmus.

The passage of the Dardanelles had taken place at a second attempt. At the first, on January 25, 1878, just as the ships, that were all cleared for action and ready to open fire, were almost within range of the forts, a telegram came off from England ordering it back. The disappointment that it caused may be imagined, for

all hands were keyed up for a desperate fight. At the second attempt on February 12th, under the same conditions, there was no effort made on the part of the Turks to dispute the passage. This time a rather untoward event occurred, for the *Alexandra* grounded on a shoal just below Chanak. There were six ships, and Hornby, retaining one to stand by the flagship, sent the others on to Constantinople ; this saved the situation, although the Russians had occupied Adrianople, and advanced to Chatalja, near Constantinople, between which city and the Russians ran the lines of Kuchuk Chekmeje, the last defence of the Turks. The Russians believed, fortunately, that the British ships were crammed with soldiers.

Owing to the sound strategic disposition of the ships at the Gallipoli peninsula, the Turks, who occupied the lines of Bulair with a strength of 70,000 men under Osman Pasha, the hero of Plevna, had a British force on either flank. Ships, not troops, although Admiral Hornby had repeatedly urged their despatch. An error that was repeated in the late war with disastrous consequences. Do we ever learn from bitter experience? Knowing all that part so well, it is still a mystery why our forces were not landed higher up the Isthmus. But the man on the spot is the best judge, or ought to be.

We were all very much on the *qui vive,* for the Russians at Rodosto, sixty miles off, were expected to advance on Bulair at any moment. In the *Condor* we occupied an advance post as a vidette ship, guns being manned day and night. I called on Osman Pasha several times during this period, and the fine old warrior always received me most genially ; we sat on cushions, and drank black coffee, ate sweetmeats, and smoked, conversing by means of an Interpreter. Later I met another Osman Pasha at Constantinople, who was an Admiral and had served in the British Navy ; he was also a fine specimen of the decent Turk—there were some in those days—and was unfeignedly glad to see us and spin a yarn or crack a joke. The Field-Marshal used to lend us Cossack ponies, on which we scoured the country behind the lines. His army was in fine fighting fettle, but as regards clothing they were a ragged lot ! It was a fine sight to see—and hear—them when they paraded *en masse* at sunset and cheered the Padishah,

who, like all the rest of those who preceded him, was not worth even a cheer, much less the great sacrifice.

As for the commissariat, it hardly existed, and all the ships contributed barrels of fragments, left over by our men from their meals. I think that the Turkish ration was one melon and a handful of cigarettes per diem. Also it will hardly be credited that this army of 70,000 men only had four doctors—so called—and the surgeons of the fleet found plenty of work, which gave them good practical experience, but the men were a wonderfully healthy crowd. As for the sanitary arrangements, they were on a par with the commissariat; when the wind blew off the lines the odour was indescribable. Gas helmets had not been invented.

A party of us took a trip to the Asiatic shore landing at Abydos, the scene of Byron's exploit; he was accompanied by Lieutenant Ekenhead, R.N. Here, too, Xerxes built his bridge of boats. We drove to a monastery and witnessed a performance by the dancing Dervishes. The dance consisted in spinning round like a teetotum, the youngest and most athletic monks gyrated in the centre of a circle of several rings, tapering off in quality to the outer one, which was reserved for the old and feeble. The monks wore long black skirts, and as they gained momentum the skirts gradually swung out and heightened the effect; the head was thrown back, and the arms extended aloft (somewhat in Kamarad style), with the palms of the hands flat. It was a quaint performance, and the efforts of the old men on the outside were pathetically comic; the younger ones kept up for an amazing time before sinking exhausted. All of them seemed to be possessed by a religious ecstasy.

We next got in touch with the Russian Army, for the ship was despatched to Rodosto, and as we steamed into the bay a fine spectacle presented itself. The whole force of 100,000 men was on the move, but after advancing some distance it returned and settled down again. Later we learned that their Chief had received orders to advance on Bulair and take it at all costs, but just as they were fairly underway a telegram countermanding the attack arrived. Vacillation is not a monopoly of British diplomacy. It was undoubtedly fortunate for the Russian Army, for the attack must have failed. The Isthmus was enfiladed by our ships, and it would have meant war with us, and Russia did not want *that*.

We stood in and anchored, and dozens of Russian officers came on board, and we had a lively time. This army was composed of the Guards. The officers were all of a good class, many of them noble, and a great number spoke English. One General, whom I ventured to compliment on his excellent English, remarked, "I ought to speak it well, for my mother was a Miss Abercromby, of Liverpool." I dined with the Artillery that night, and got on board at 5 a.m. ; we left next day, but paid another visit, and stayed several days with much mutual good-fellowship. But they were terrors at putting away the drinks. They were very emphatic in declaring that the British and Russians had no quarrel, affirming that it was an affair of the politicians.

A Colonel, Prince Oldenburg, commanding a cavalry regiment, invited us to inspect it ; we found it a fine one, and well horsed. He told me that he commanded a German cavalry regiment also, and that he had been with it all through the Franco-German War, and now through this one with his Russians. He seemed a glutton for fighting.

We now went on to our own fleet at Ismid, and did duty as a liberty boat, taking officers and men up to Constantinople. Finally the fleet moved to Princopo, and we were sent as extra Stationaire to the Ambassador, Sir Henry Layard. Every nation had a Stationaire to attend on the national representative. Some had two, as ourselves, the French, and Germans. The United States, Austrian, Italian, Spanish and Greeks, one each.

The aftermath of war was very much in evidence ; the hotels and places of amusement were thronged with officers, prominent among whom were soldiers of fortune, or Swashbucklers, as we termed them ; a few of these were English. It was the time of the Armistice, and crowds of Russian Officers visited the city. They probably had orders to preserve a peaceable demeanour, but the same cannot be said of the Swashbucklers, who rattled their sabres and endeavoured by every means to provoke the visitors. I was a spectator of more than one of these incidents, but only one in connection with our own officers. A party of Russians entered a Café in which were some of us in mufti, while the former were in uniform ; but I suppose we were easily recognizable, for one of the Russians, who was under the influence of drink, approached and began to be offensive in his

behaviour. We paid no attention to him, and getting bolder, he knocked off one man's hat, and then patted himself on the breast, remarking, "Me Russian." Our friend got up, without picking up the hat, patted himself on his chest, remarked, "Me English," and promptly downed the Russian. The Russian had selected the best man with his fists among our crowd. It looked rather nasty for a moment, but before the man had time to get up, his more sober companions dragged him off and quitted the Café in a body.

Among the Stationaires the Germans were universally disliked. The Americans and French were our chief friends, and we chummed together a good deal; but sailors of all nations used to share the brotherhood of the seas in those days; the Germans have now put themselves outside the pale. Most of the ships were moored in line-abreast off Tophane, with their sterns hauled into the shore. Our Captain very prudently declined a billet in what was satirically known as 'Harmony Row,' and we moored in solitary state. Following events justified his caution, for in a southerly gale the outside ship parted her moorings and crashed into the next one; they all followed suit until the whole ten of them were in a hopeless mix up. The medley that ensued can be imagined; it was as if the Tower of Babel had vomited forth its inhabitants, and amid the howling of the gale we could hear shouts and orders in all languages.

Immediately above our anchorage lay three or four Turkish Ironclads, moored off the Sultan's Palace of Yildiz Kiosk. He liked to feast his eyes on these ships, built in England on borrowed money, not yet paid back. As usual, with anything that the Turk had control of, they were in a most inefficient state, and were simply rotting at their anchors, in spite of the efforts of two capable Englishmen, Hobart and Woods, Pashas, both of whom had served in the Royal Navy. On paying an official visit to the flagship, I found the greater part of the crew engaged in prayer, prostrated on the deck, each man with his little bit of carpet. The Captain, who had served in our Navy, and spoke English very well, remarked that it was 'damned inconvenient,' as directly there was a job on they dropped it for their devotions. The remainder of the fleet was safely stowed away in the Golden Horn. If they had ventured into

the Black Sea the Russians would have had an easy job. I do not disparage the Turk as a fighter, but as an organizer, and with them all, graft was paramount.

Even in our billet we were not safe. One night a huge steamer dragged its anchors and fouled us. We veered until we were out to the clinch, and, in our turn, had fouled a Frenchman astern of us. I told the Sub to go to the stern and hail the Frenchman to veer cable. The Sub (having no French) in true British fashion called out "Veeray," which was the nearest he could get to it. Now 'Virer' is to haul in; the proper term is 'Filer,' which means pay out. So all the answer he got was a plaintive wail of "Monsieur, *Je ne puis pas.*" The Frenchman was out to the clinch as well.

Every Friday the Sultan went to Mosque in state; this is called the Selamlik. For certain reasons the particular Mosque which he intended to honour was not divulged until the last moment. Every precaution was taken, such as lining the route with picked troops, and guarding the carriage with an escort of cavalry. Of course, we took the opportunity of seeing the man labelled by Gladstone as 'Abdul the Damned, the great Assassin.' Through our Embassy we secured good places, and in due time a carriage arrived in which sat the Sultan. We saw a man dressed in a brilliant uniform and wearing a fez with a valuable jewelled aigrette on it; some glittering orders sparkled on his breast. His face bore very pronounced features, such as a prominent nose and dark eyes, while the remarkable pallor of his complexion was accentuated by black hair and moustache; his bearing was listless, but I seemed to detect a shade of apprehension. The crowd was not demonstrative.

I shall not attempt to describe the beauties of the Bosphorus. It has been so often done that any description of mine would be vain repetition; suffice it to say that it is all that has been said of it and then 'Some.' As regards the city, I think it is the most beautiful from the water and the dirtiest on land that I have ever seen. Even Pera, the European quarter, was no exception. Beautiful buildings—and the place swarms with them—do not compensate for dirt and lack of transit; the usual method of getting about was by hiring a pony from a line that stood at the street corners. The trappings were none of the cleanest, and the animals not too sure-footed. Going to a dinner at the Embassy

one night with Neeld, the latter's pony came down, covering his goldlaced trousers with the filthy mud that is allowed to accumulate in the streets. Nobody ever troubled to remove it, and the scavengering was left to the famous dogs, who kept strictly to their own particular streets. I understand that these animals have been destroyed ; sanitary arrangements must be looking up. At night time it was advisable to walk in the middle of the street, for the householders had a playful way of emptying their slops out of the windows ; it saved labour. A cascade of dirty water (to put it mildly) is not calculated to improve wearing apparel ! It was as well to go ' Heeled ' at night, for there were any number of ruffians ready to take advantage of the stranger within their gates. Travelling by water was different ; one hired a caïque, lolled at leisure, and took one's fill of palaces, mosques, and minarets. A trip up the Golden Horn, the Sweet Waters, was a dream. I must not forget to mention the constant stream of birds that passes up and down the centre of the waterway, flying just a foot or two above it, a curious sight. They are Shearwaters, and are supposed by the intelligent Turk to be reincarnations of his countrymen, therefore sacred.

We visited Stamboul, and explored St. Sophia, its grand interior disfigured by tawdry texts from the Koran painted on huge circular shields. My chief feeling was one of regret that such a noble building should have been diverted from Christianity to Mohammedanism, although still devoted to the worship of the same God. Hither came Mohammed II on the fall of the city in 1453, and all who had sought sanctuary in the building were put to the sword. After this the Conqueror mounted the altar and returned thanks to Almighty God.

Then we went to the Seraglio with its heaps of treasures and bowls of uncut gems, the Bazaar with its combined squalor, wealth and smells, the Admiralty that seemed asleep, and, finally, other Mosques until we were satiated with them.

At that time no Europeans were allowed in Stamboul after sunset. To reach that quarter one had to cross the bridge that spanned the Golden Horn from Galata to Pera. My recollections are that it was better kept than Pera. Crossing the bridge you ran the gauntlet of innumerable beggars who displayed the most revolting collection of sores and diseases, no doubt cultivated for

the purpose of appealing to the passers; in fact, they are regarded by them as a monetary asset. There are more awful sights in this place than anywhere else, but the East abounds with these people. They don't even trouble to brush the flies away, and the children's eyes are often ringed with these disseminators of disease; sometimes they looked as if they had on a pair of spectacles. At Beyrout there was an extraordinary deformity in the shape of a Being who was carried about on the back of a stout Syrian. He reminded me of Sinbad the Sailor. This freak seemed to be all head, hardly any body, very short legs, and long, skinny arms. The expression of his face was most repulsive, and one gladly parted with a coin to get rid of such a hideous object. This revolting wretch was reported to be quite rich, the result of the alms that he collected, and to be the proud possessor of a Harem.

As regards society in Constantinople, there was great choice and variety. We were very much welcomed by the Consul-General of the United States, who kept open house and entertained liberally. There we met people of all nations, among them many Levantines. The latter seemed to have the gift of tongues, and I can recall one brilliant young woman who, sitting on a lounge, could converse with half a dozen admirers of different nationalities; she must have got some fun out of it. Then there were two accomplished Armenian girls who had taught themselves English, which they spoke with a most extraordinary accent. We got up some private theatricals that proved a great success, and even if some of the polyglot audience did not understand it all, they made a good pretence, and heartily joined in the merriment. Society owed a great deal to Consul-General and Mrs. Heap. Nor must I forget the Swedish Minister and his two charming daughters, the Misses d'Ernhoff, and other friends who lived at Scutari, on the Asiatic side.

At the house of an English resident I met the accomplished Turkish Princess, Nazli Hanoum, who had emancipated herself from the Turkish custom of appearing veiled. She was very pretty and rich, and was generally accompanied by an equally attractive companion of the same sex and opinions; both could converse fluently in English. When Lord Brassey's yacht, the *Sunbeam,* came in I had the honour of taking them on board.

We were, of course, invited to the official functions at the various Embassies, and one of the most superb fancy-dress balls that I have ever attended was given by the Austrian Ambassador. There were about 500 guests all in fancy-dress, some very beautiful, others quaint. I had to invent something, and finally evolved a costume that sufficiently resembled the orthodox pirate as to warrant my calling myself one. A good ship's cutlass gave it the finishing touch. Toward the end the usual cotillon came on, and when we had exhausted its numerous figures (which were ably conducted by an experienced leader) we all marched off with our partners, circulated through the various rooms, returning to the ballroom to find it laid for supper. The tables had been fully prepared, and rushed in during our absence; it was a fine example of gastronomic stage-management.

Mounted paper-chases, organized by the British Attachés, were a great source of amusement. Mounted on every variety of steed, we enjoyed some fine scampers over the neighbouring country, to the amazement of Johnnie Turco, as must have been also the cricket matches at Therapia, whither the Embassies retired for the summer months. A party of us rode to the Turkish lines and called on the Pasha, who received us hospitably; he introduced us to Baker Pasha, a former Colonel in the British Army, who had accepted a post in the Turkish Army, and who was chiefly responsible for the excellent lines of defence. Continuing in their service, he fell at Trinkitat in 1884, at the head of the Egyptian Force that broke before the onslaught of the Mahdi's Fuzzy-wuzzies and perished to a man. He was a fine soldier, and died the death that he would doubtless have preferred.

At Constantinople the women all wore the Yashmak; the upper classes were not too particular as to the transparency of it, and many of them were remarkably handsome, the Harems being largely recruited from Georgians and Circassians. The only part of their costumes that we could see was the hat, which was only thinly covered, and usually of the latest French fashion. These ladies knew how to give the 'Glad Eye' (this expression was not in use then, but I have heard of a 'Come hither Look'), and some of them appeared quite ready for an intrigue; but it was a dangerous game for

a European to play. We were told of numerous women being consigned to the waters of the Bosphorus, muffled up in sacks. Of course, these women were closely watched, but most of their attendants were of the class that is easily influenced by a bribe.

At the signing of peace we had a trip into the Black Sea, going to Bourgas, a port on the west coast where the Russians were embarking their troops ; these were infantry of the line, and not of the same quality as those we had met at Rodosto. We met many General Officers with their Staffs—some had their wives with them ; a large party came on board, and we found the latter as charming as their husbands. None of them had ever seen a British Warship, and were consumed with curiosity. Many of them were Princesses, a somewhat plentiful title in Russia.

I also met a distinguished Russian Naval Officer, Commander Makaroff, who afterwards was torpedoed in his flagship, the *Retzivan*, by the Japanese off Port Arthur, where we had only just joined as Commander-in-Chief. He was a most impressive man, tall, good-looking, with a full blonde beard. Very genial, he soon won you. He spoke several languages, and told me that he was occupied in teaching himself Spanish. Most of the Russians seem admirable linguists, and able to tackle any language, which is not surprising when we realize how difficult their own is. Russia lost a splendid son in Makaroff.

Upon the evacuation of Adrianople, Admiral Hornby took the fleet back through the Dardanelles on the 19th of March, 1879 ; we had rejoined a few days previously. The fleet passed through the Straits in two columns and anchored at Besika the same evening. Before quitting Constantinople the 'Condors' were the guests of the Pera Club at a farewell dinner ; we separated at an early hour, and when leaving I noticed a room that was stacked with empty bottles. The secretary informed me that they represented the evening's consumption. Some drink ! The next morning a large crowd came off to wish us goodbye, and we administered cocktails to a good many sufferers with bad heads. 'A hair of the dog that bit you.'

On the general dispersion that followed, we were ordered to visit the island of Crete, going first to Suda Bay, into which we were piloted by a Turkish Officer,

who made a great pretence of there being a minefield. My private opinion was that it did not exist; if it did, although the war was over, the apathetic Turk had not removed it. Calling at several places on the north side, we reached the island of Scarpanto to examine its harbour; it was completely landlocked, and big enough to accommodate a larger number of ships, but it would be easy to block. The scenery all round these parts is grand. Mountains, cliffs, and formidable rocks with quaint-looking towns perched in unexpected places, generally dominated by an ancient castle, around which the houses cluster. When you land you arrive very soon at the conclusion that some sort of protection is needed, for all the male portion of these communities go about armed to the teeth—walking arsenals—and would as soon cut your throat as shake hands with you.

We got back to Malta and found ourselves with the fleet. The great charm was the opera, where, for the modest sum of three shillings one heard all the standard works. Many celebrated singers have made their debut there; in my time the sisters Ravogli were paramount favourites.

The dividing-line between the British and the Maltese was very apparent in the Opera House; the latter occupied one side of the house and we the other. A Maltese who had found a place among us one evening did not stand up when the National Anthem was played. One of our party leaned over, tapped him on the shoulder, and requested him to rise. He curtly refused, whereupon our man seized him by the scruff of the neck and forced him to stand, which he had to do to avoid being choked. The proletariat is as a class industrious, but the usual number of beggars is to be met with; visitors will recall the well-known one at the foot of the Nix Mangiare steps. Many of the men are sturdy, good-looking fellows, but the women, almost without exception, are the plainest I ever encountered; perhaps that is the reason why they continue to wear the Faldette—a black hood that covers the head and conceals the face. This fashion was adopted when the French captured the island.

During the winter the harbour sheltered several yachts, the owners of which were most hospitable. The well-known United Services Club in Strada Reale was a great rendezvous. Who does not remember the Quails in aspic and the Becaficos? The boats from Sicily

brought over quantities of fruit, and wines of Italy were to be had in profusion. It was balls, dinners, and picnics over again; but one found time to visit objects of interest, such as the Cathedral of St. John, there to inspect the silver gates and listen to High Mass with its splendid musical setting, at which all the operatic stars assisted. The Maltese have a saying, 'Beautiful Naples, holy Rome, little Malta the flower of the World,' and I think they may be pardoned for the conceit.

Fleet theatricals became popular, and we held them in the old Theatre Manoel. A naval chaplain, who was a thorough sportsman (among other things he coached his racing-boat's crew), took a small part in the play, and scored distinctly. After the first performance, a shore-going parson who had asked him to preach for him, wrote saying that he could not allow a man who had appeared on the stage of a theatre to fill his pulpit. This is a curious instance of Christian charity.

After being refitted, we received orders for Athens, and left one afternoon ahead of an ironclad that was going to Naples. The C.-in-C. was on the Barranca (a promenade overlooking the harbour), and having a party with him, he wished to give them a show, so a signal was made to 'make all sail.' It is almost incredible, but the big ship never saw the signal, although she might have condescended to take a hint from us, as we were soon under all possible sail. I wonder what the Admiral said to the Captain in the next mail-bag! This incident reminds me that in the Channel Fleet I once saw a ship make all plain sail before the men had time to get aloft. This glaring instance of 'Strop and Toggle Work' was a little too much for the Admiral, and some nasty signals were fired off at her.

We arrived and moored in the Piræus, and found a French Squadron in the harbour. Our first object was to visit Athens and the Acropolis. One visit did not suffice me, and on each occasion the wonder and charm of it all seemed to increase. But every one did not view these fascinating ruins from the same standpoint; one of my companions had only eyes for his ship anchored in the distant Piræus, and he drew my attention to the brass on the forecastle, and expatiated on the brilliancy with which they shone in the sun. Another, when we had gained the shade of the Parthenon, sat

down, remarking, "Some fools come here and weep, I should like a drink."

I think that the extraordinary solitude that prevailed on the Acropolis impressed me more than anything else. Generally there was not a soul about, not even the usual importunate guide. It created a feeling of awe and solemnity. Such conditions assisted one to construct scenes of the place as it was when Pericles and his successors had completed their work and it was in its glorious prime. Now it is represented by a few columns and portions of walls, while the surface of the Acropolis is littered with blocks of marble and stone. What a scene of enchantment it would present if it had been kept in the same condition as the more fortunate temple of Theseus. But every country has had its vandals, and our own has not escaped; witness the ruined Abbeys and Castles.

But like the ancient Greeks, we can still stroll round the summit and enjoy the spectacle that rewards the enthusiast. In Athens modern buildings of interest were few. The King's palace was small and unimpressive. King George was a great favourite with his people, and I have seen him walking about the city with only an A.D.C. in attendance, and yet he fell by the hand of an Assassin.

Another time I rode from the Piræus with a French officer to inspect the city; he was a good Cicerone, and finally we went to a Café on the banks of the historic Ilissus, whence we enjoyed a view of the Acropolis with the towering columns of the temple of Jove (what was left of them) intervening. We were joined by one of the fair Artistes, who at first was amusing, but she began to get decidedly wearisome; the riddle was how to get rid of her without hurting her feelings. She was called away for a turn, and my companion solved the difficulty by borrowing my riding-whip and placing it—together with his own—across the seat of the chair she had occupied. After her song she returned, glanced at the chair, and took the hint.

We had become great friends with the officers of *La Touche Treville*. Unfortunately a very untoward incident occurred in connection with her. Warships, for obvious reasons, are supplied with flags of all nations. Good signalmen, like good housekeepers, know the value of keeping things properly aired. In the British Navy

the orders are that such airing must not be performed in public, in order to avoid offending the susceptibilities of the Powers concerned. One morning *La Touche Treville* hoisted about fourteen of these flags, ours among them, but in an inferior position. This was too much for our Captain, who despatched an officer with a request to the French Captain not to show our flag in such a manner. It was not a pleasant job, and I don't think that Neeld, upon whom it fell, liked it much, but duty is duty, and he duly performed it. Before he had had time to return all the flags were hauled down, and then, slowly and majestically, the French Tricolor and the White Ensign were hoisted side by side until they floated from the masthead in company. It was a tactful amende and an instance of a Frenchman's readiness of resource.

In the meantime we had been rather perturbed, for we had been invited on board that night to dinner. (N.B. —The French officers had an admirable *chef*.) Presently a boat was seen coming, and one of the 'Trevilles' came over the side in full dress. He approached the Captain and made him a speech, the gist of which was that his Captain tendered his regret, and at the same time expressed his astonishment that a friendly nation should be deemed capable of offering a slight where none could possibly be intended. I was present, and the officer turned to me and said, "So far I have spoken as a French Officer, now I wish to speak as a French Gentleman. I am instructed by my brother officers to say that we still hope to see you all to-night, in spite of this regrettable affair." We went and spent a most enjoyable evening with these good fellows. Their yellow Chartreuse was a dream.

Their flagship, *La Reine Blanche*, lay close by. One morning their band struck up a lively air of Offenbach, and the sentry in the walk nearest us grounded his rifle, and with great enjoyment to himself—and us—performed an excellent cancan. I wonder what would have happened if the officer of the watch had looked over the ship's side.

Thence we were ordered to Salonica. Captain Synge, one of the British Commissioners in Cyprus, had been captured, while on leave, by brigands, who were holding him for ransom, which they modestly fixed at £10,000. The Turkish Government was almost powerless outside the town, and had to employ agents to arrange terms.

It was thought that a British warship might expedite matters. On the way up we passed quite close to Cape Colonna, on which stands the remains of a temple to Minerva; it is of white marble, and a fine sight when viewed from the sea. Its isolated position on the hill renders it most conspicuous.

During the negotiations we remained at anchor off the town. We were most hospitably entertained by Consul-General Blount and his wife. From the latter I learned to play 'Cayenne Whist,' a cross between whist and bridge. The lady, a most popular person, made an excellent instructress. We also had some horses placed at our disposal by an Armenian gentleman, and got plenty of exercise, although we were limited in direction on account of the brigands, over whom the Turks appeared to have no control. Salonica had all the characteristics of an eastern town, and harboured citizens of all nations, many of whom were not too well disposed toward us. It was in the usual state of cities under Turkish rule.

At length negotiations were completed, and we stood over and anchored under the shade of Mount Olympus, in the neighbourhood of which the prisoner was to be handed over to us. I was sent in to fetch him, and on landing met a group of Turks, among whom was our countryman. I think he was unfeignedly glad to see me, for the ruffianly brigands had cut his servant's throat and had been threatening to send in pieces of himself (such as ears), unless the ransom was forthcoming quickly. There was not much to choose between the brigands and the Turks in appearance, and it is quite likely that they were in collusion.

We now had a spell of some weeks at Port Said. It had an unsavoury reputation, which on acquaintance we found it fully deserved. Ships came in at all hours, and there was plenty of hustle and coal dust, and during the six weeks we remained there, we lived in the latter. Port Said was then one of the most awful holes in the world. All the scoundrels that were trying to evade justice seemed to find an asylum in it; consequently there was no place so unsafe or so cosmopolitan. The gambling houses, cafés and other haunts, were open day and night. When any large steamer came in with passengers and there was a chance of a pigeon to be plucked, decoys stood at the doors and enticed people

in. The roulette tables were all faked, and could be controlled by the Croupier. On entry the unwary would find a stool-pigeon who was winning freely ; this usually induced them to back their own luck, of course with disastrous results. We old hands used to take advantage of the above by backing the confederate up to a certain point, and after winning a few medjidiehs (Turkish dollars), gracefully withdrawing. It used to make the proprietors mad. It was, of course, quite unsafe to venture out alone into the dark and unsavoury quarter of this ruffianly settlement. One or two of the Café Chantants were tolerably decent, but they provided a class of amusement that soon palls. The music was furnished by a Band of Bohemian women which, under a manager of the sterner sex, visits most of the important places in the Near East, and in this manner earn their dowry. A remarkable flight of quails occurred during our stay ; it lasted for two days, and we caught hundreds, for they were too tired to escape. We almost got tired of quails on toast, and sympathized with the poor Israelites with their limited diet.

At length we cleared out of this pestiferous place, and headed for Jaffa and Acre, the latter an interesting old place with fine fighting reminiscences, and memorable as the place where Bonaparte received a setback. I went over to Mount Carmel, where there is a monastery, in which is situated a cave wherein Elijah was fed by the ravens. The monk who showed it to me winked as he made the statement. Later he confided to me that he would willingly renounce the pleasures of the monastery for the pomps and vanities of the wicked world, which he regretted having quitted. It was a monastery of the silent fraternity, and this individual found it exceedingly wearisome, no doubt, for he was a garrulous person. At Jaffa we were visited by two officers of the Royal Engineers, who were engaged in a survey of Palestine. One of them was Horatio Herbert Kitchener, destined to make a great name for himself and to render invaluable services to his country. He was a fine attractive-looking man, and of decidedly arresting personality.

Beyrout again, after a look in at Tyre and Sidon, and here we spent Christmas of 1879. I went off to the Lebanon on a visit to some friends ; but before it was completed my recall arrived, for the ship had been suddenly ordered to Larnaca, in Cyprus, to meet

the Admiral, and early in January, 1880, we arrived there to find him in the *Alexandra*.

After anchoring, the signalman reported the Admiral passing in his barge. On arrival on our beam the barge stopped, and the Admiral was heard to say that he wished to see the First-Lieutenant. Somewhat perturbed, I mounted the bridge and saluted him. 'Uncle Jeff' (as he was called) then made the following remark, "The *Condor* looks as if she had been a fortnight in harbour, instead of having just come in from Sea." It is unnecessary, perhaps, to say that I was much gratified by these words of praise, but I fully recognized that my shipmates were included in it; it was their loyalty and co-operation that enabled me to achieve success. Praise from such a man was worth having, and we felt an intensified feeling of regret at his departure; he was about to be relieved in his command, after a strenuous three years. During that period he had many knotty problems to deal with, and he solved them all satisfactorily, acting with the ready promptitude and vigour that distinguished him. The honour of the country rested in his hands on more than one occasion, and never did he fail.

We made our farewell to this distinguished and popular Admiral, and sailed for Famagusta. This old Venetian city is enclosed in walls, and most of it, although deserted, is in a good state of preservation. A sallyport opens on to a pier, and the harbour is partly enclosed by a breakwater. Within the walls are some fine buildings; it was silent, deserted, and eerie. Dining one night with the Commissioner, who lived outside the walls, I experienced an extraordinarily uncanny feeling when returning to the ship. I entered by the North gate, and had to pass through the town. Walking along the silent streets—lit only by a full moon, seen occasionally between the tops of houses—and most of the time in deep shadows, I began to wonder whether I had been prudent in going about alone and unarmed; all sorts of dangers seemed to be lurking in dark corners. With a feeling of relief I reached the sallyport and emerged on to the jetty, where I found my boat and felt cheered by the honest faces of the crew.

From Famagusta we went to Alexandretta, the seaport of Aleppo. Our avowed purpose was to enjoy some sport for which the region was celebrated. At

Alexandretta is a snipe marsh eight miles long. Thence we moved over to Ayas Bay, on the opposite shore, and anchored at the mouth of a small river; here were wild swan, duck, teal, woodcock, bustard, snipe, francolin, wild boar and deer. It blew a Norther for two days, during which we were unable to land; when we did so, the woodcock had arrived in hundreds, every bush turned out a dozen or more—tired and easy shooting. In one locality a flock of flamingos had taken up their quarters, hundreds of them, and to see them rise in a flock was a fine sight.

While shooting I met a party of horsemen, a rare event, as the surrounding country was deserted. They were hawking, and each man had a bird on his wrist. One of them made signs that he would like to look at my gun, but I was not taking any, and shortly after that they rode off. I had my marine with me, and he had a gun too, so that we were quite a match for them. It does not do to trust the wily native, and a recent incident had put me on my guard. An officer, shooting alone, had indulged in a midday nap, leaning his gun against a tree. When he awoke, a native had the gun, and on his attempting to recover it the man aimed at him. He did not get his gun, and returned a sadder and wiser man.

The above, coupled with what might have been a serious affair for me, made me take a companion always. The affair I allude to was as follows: I shot a duck, and advanced to pick it up; in a moment I was up to my waist in a quicksand. I threw myself back, and with a frantic effort managed to squirm out, but I never got that duck. Some years afterwards a Lieutenant went out alone in these parts and never returned; I have no doubt as to what his fate was.

Then there was the affair at Artaki, in the Marmora. Two Commanders, Selby and Grenfell, were out shooting, and were annoyed by dogs. Selby incautiously shot one. The natives, who set great store by these animals, turned out in great force and mobbed them. Against the advice of Grenfell, Selby gave up his gun to one of the men in order to show that their intentions were peaceable, whereupon the man killed him. Grenfell promptly shot this man, and at this moment the boat's crew arrived on the scene, having been attracted by the disturbance. Thus reinforced, Grenfell fought his way back to the boat. The Turks eventually executed two of these men for being

accessories ; probably they were not there at all ; but it was done as 'save face,' and we had to be satisfied. Oh no, never trust a native until you know him and he knows you.

Although the plains at Ayas were deserted, there must once have been considerable civilization, for we often came across blocks of marble and piles of stones, sometimes with inscriptions cut on them. After a successful shikar, we returned to Alexandretta and found an Italian Sloop, the *Cariddi,* enjoying our snipe marsh. The Commander, a Prince Thomas and cousin of the King of Italy, was one of the best shots I ever met.

While on the coast of Syria we shipped a Dragoman to act as Interpreter and useful man. This man, José, had acted in this capacity in several ships, and there may still be N.O.'s who remember the old one-eyed rascal. His solitary optic was a very capable one, and generally twinkled with humour. He had all the lore of the country at his finger's ends, and indicated to me with great exactitude the spot where the whale evacuated Jonah after his remarkable submarine trip.

About the end of April we had a surprise visit from the new C.-in-C., Sir Beauchamp Seymour, afterwards Lord Alcester, who was making a tour of the station in the dispatch-vessel *Salamis.* On his departure he gave us orders to return to Malta, calling at Limasol, and we arrived at the former place in May, 1880. Limasol was already showing great improvement since the British had taken over the island of Cyprus from the Turks. Order had been restored and law established. A great number of antiques had been unearthed—vases, lamps and bowls. I have a beautiful lamp that comes from Larnaca, and a mortuary vase from Athens that I procured from the Acropolis, where they were being found in great profusion.

At Malta we found the new Admiral had returned, and he gave out that he had heard that the station had earned a good reputation for smartness at drill and that he meant to test it. Accordingly the fleet had many heavy evolutions to carry out which seemed to satisfy him. The most strenuous was 'Prepare for Action Aloft.' One ship, the *Achilles,* was amazingly good ; her time was generally under three minutes. All sails had to be unbent, studding-sail booms sent on deck, top-gallant-masts and yards sent down, and yards braced

up ; the big ships housed bowsprits, and sent down the crossjack-yard as well. Having a ram in the *Condor,* we had to top up the bowsprit, which gave us a perky appearance. The Commander of the *Achilles* was W. H. Molyneux, who was first of the *Sirius*, previously mentioned. He died early in his career, which was one of great promise. He once bet me that the *Achilles* would beat us at ' Action Aloft ' ; the stake was a bottle of champagne, and I had it on board *his* ship the following day. Being a small ship, the odds were rather in our favour. Another ship, the *Swiftsure,* was paramount as regards precision. She was always in the front rank, and all evolutions were performed with clockwork regularity, an excellent example of method, and a real treat to watch.

The Governor gave a fancy-dress ball at the Palace, and the Admiral and General followed suit. The gunners had a fine mess at the Auberge Castille ; but our particular friends were the Lincolns (the old tenth), at Ricasoli, a most hospitable lot. There was a great deal of dining out on board the ships, and on such occasions I generally took my guitar. It does one good to recall those days, and the merry evenings we participated in, for there was quite a lot of musical talent in the fleet.

The gunrooms shared in the entertainments. The duty-officer on one of the Ironclads was surprised one evening by the signalman reporting that the General commanding the troops was approaching in the garrison boat. The Captain came on deck to receive him ; they waited expectantly, and the General came over the side. After a short conversation he explained to the mystified Captain that he had come to dine in the gunroom with one of the midshipmen. The youngster was sent for, and the Captain (who was one of the best) contrived to tell him that if he wanted anything his steward would supply it. However, the youth assured him (and from what I remember of him I do not doubt it) that he would be quite well fixed. The General was heard to say, on leaving, that he had had quite the time of his life. He was an extremely kind-hearted man, and no doubt extracted a good deal of amusement from the boys. I don't know which to admire the most, the General for his good nature or the lad for his cheek.

Some weeks of this, and a general exodus took place. One squadron, with the Admiral, went off to Naples

and the other to Venice; we went with the former, passed Syracuse, Etna and Messina, avoided Scylla and Charybdis, and anchored off Palermo. Thence we were detached to Naples, passing Stromboli by night, when it represented the appearance of a freshly lighted pastille. So much is known of Naples that it would be superfluous for me to try to add to it. It is a fascinating neighbourhood, and would be much better if it were not for the Lazzaroni, although they are a cheerful, musical crowd of unwashed rogues, many of them very expert on the guitar. I became quite popular when it was discovered that I was familiar with it also and could sing 'Santa Lucia,' and they were hugely delighted with some of our English ditties.

We took first-class returns to Pompeii—it sounded so prosaic. We saw the spot where the Roman Sentry added an unknown name to the list of those who preferred death to dishonour, visited the Forum and other places of well-known repute, and concluded by inspecting the Museum, to which no women are admitted by reason of the pornographic nature of the exhibits. The excavators were still at work, and we saw paintings being uncovered that were as fresh as the day they were done.

Having read Bulwer Lytton, I noted that the streets still show deep scores caused by the chariot wheels. Evidently the Town Council was reluctant to increase the burden of the tax-payers in those happy days. I wish some of them would re-incarnate in ours. But what struck me was the fact that, owing to the narrowness of the streets, no two chariots could pass; this the ruts plainly indicated. They must therefore have continually circulated in a given direction, and the Pompeian policeman must have had to see to it that, like poor Joe, they kept moving on. One can imagine the haughty Patrician Lady having to dash on board as her chariot glided past.

Capri we found quite up to the guide-book, and the waters as blue as they were said to be. Thanks to Ray Lankester, we now know that it is the real and proper colour. By the by, Ray Lankester is among the names of eminent Paulines.

We lay in the Bay of Naples for some days, and enjoyed the bright days and gorgeous nights over which Vesuvius brooded in the background, looking like another pastille.

Then over to Bastia, a place of intense interest to Britons, for near here, at Calvi, Nelson lost his eye. What would he have said at Copenhagen if he had not? Here we found a different human atmosphere, for the Corsican is not like his neighbour the Neapolitan. Thence we went to Cività Vecchia, whence some went to Rome, my trial being to ship-keep in the Captain's absence. When they returned we left for Genoa. We found it a dirty and rather smelly place, chiefly memorable for an excellent dinner (wine *compris*) for three francs. Possibly the wine was not all we believed it to be.

The rest of our squadron joined us there. While swinging to our anchor we bumped our rudder on the mole, and when it was reported the Admiral sent two divers from the flagship to ascertain if any damage had been done. Divers on service wear a red cap, and while doing so get extra pay at the rate of eighteen pence an hour ; the cap is to take off the strain of the helmet. These men reported that we had lost several sheets of copper, and were supplied with some new ones to make good. The operation took some time, and when we reported finished, the Admiral made a signal to hoist the rudder on board, at the same time ordering the midshipmen of the fleet to attend and see it done.

I don't know whether he issued this order for such an unusual job for instructional purposes only or whether he ' smelt a rat ' ; if the latter, events proved him to be right, for when we hoisted it in we found that there was not a scratch on it, or a single sheet of new copper. The ca'-canny divers had quietly dropped the sheets of copper to the bottom, and after allowing a certain time to elapse had come up and reported finished. These men suffered by being disrated from petty officers to able seamen, a punishment richly deserved. It was often suspected that this sort of thing prevailed, and that the divers even went to sleep, but this time they calculated without the Admiral. Unshipping the rudder was somewhat of a job, but it was child's play compared to shipping it. Have you ever tried to ship a boat's rudder when there is a lot of sea on?

From Genoa we went to Villefranche. Nice is close by, and Monte Carlo within easy distance, both offering inducements of varying character.

We returned to Malta and learnt that we were to pay-off and recommission, the new crew coming out in

the *Tamar,* so it was a case of dig out and get ready for the new lot. We had not much time, but the arrival of the Trooper found the *Condor* in Bighi Bay thoroughly refitted and ready for the sea. The new crew had only to go on board and light the fires.

On the 20th of August, 1880, we hauled down the pendant, and the ship was recommissioned for another period of service, during which, under Lord Charles Beresford, she won great renown at the bombardment of Alexandria.

With the old crew I went on board the *Tamar,* and reached home about the middle of September. Thus terminated one of the most interesting and instructive commissions that ever fell to my lot. One often regrets lost opportunities of not seeing more, but duty is duty, and the shoemaker must stick to his last. Just before sailing I received a most complimentary letter from Sir Beauchamp Seymour, an extract from which stands at the head of this chapter.

The ship had won a good name on the station, and I was one day surprised by a visit from Captain (afterwards Admiral Sir Algernon) Fieschi Heneage. He said, "I have been told that I must not leave the station without seeing the *Condor.*" I took him round the ship, and when he left he remarked to me, "She is in every way worthy to belong to the Mediterranean Fleet." All those who can remember 'Pompo' will appreciate this remark of his, and imagine how he would say it.

CHAPTER XII

THE *SERAPIS*

Heaven's light our guide.

I HAD now to face another period of half-pay—at first as a welcome relaxation. If a gay time had been my only aspiration I should have gained it. In particular, at the house of a well-known Q.C. (prominent in the divorce court) I met literary and artistic people, actors and actresses from stars of the first to the sixth magnitude. It was the time of Nelly Farren, Violet Cameron, Sylvia Grey, Letty Lind and Fred Leslie.

Three or four months of this, and, just as I was beginning to feel like a returned empty, an unusual piece of work for an N.O. came my way. A friend of mine who was running a theatrical company offered me a part. He had seen me in private theatricals, and apparently considered me able to hold my own on the professional stage. The part was in musical comedy. My ability to read music was small, but I had a good ear. There was not much hesitation on my side. I memorized my songs, went through a rehearsal or two, and embarked on a new career in which, however, I had no intention of remaining. For two months I led a nomadic existence, and performed at several second-rate towns ; only once in London at the Dilettante, an art club (long defunct), on the site of which now stands the Palladium.

It was an amusing experience, but I quitted it without regret, except at leaving some very pleasant companions with whom one was at once on friendly terms. I don't think they knew or cared who I was. They called me by my Christian name at once ; my surname was an assumed one. We lived in lodgings, and the ladies did the catering ; but the life is a long way from being ideal.

During this time an offer was made me, through a mutual friend, to go as First-Lieutenant in the *Doterel*; but as she was only a sloop and not much bigger than the *Condor,* I refused it, being ambitious of something better. It turned out to be a lucky decision, for the unfortunate ship blew up at Puntas Arenas in the Straits of Magellan, and out of a crew of 176 only about 20 survived.

One day, while walking down Regent Street, Admiral Sir Vesey Hamilton (at that time one of the Sea Lords) stopped me and said, "What's this I hear about you going on the Stage?" I assured him that it was only to put in the time while I was waiting for a ship. He looked at me very keenly and replied that he did not approve of it at all. A few days afterwards my appointment to the *Serapis* appeared.

The *Serapis* was one of the five great white Troopers. They were sister ships, and were distinguished by a broad coloured band. The *Serapis* had a green one, *Euphrates* blue, *Jumna* red, *Crocodile* yellow, and *Malabar* black. When built, they were well suited for the work, but when I joined on March 14, 1881, they were getting out of date. They were handsome craft, barque rigged, with heavy masts and yards. The topsails were Cunningham's patent reefing, somewhat on the plan of a window blind. The idea was a good one, and answered well in light winds; I never saw it used in heavy weather.

The internal fittings had become obsolete; the only people comfortably accommodated were the naval officers and crew. The former had their cabins on the starboard side of a big saloon, which occupied the whole of the after-part of the deck from the mizen mast to the stern. On the port side were the ladies' cabin and nursery, with cabins for the Commanding Officer of troops. The crew was berthed under the forecastle, and their quarters were good. We mustered 300 officers and men.

On the deck below, under the saloon, were the military officers' cabins and another ladies' cabin known as the 'Dove Cot.' Married officers, accompanied by their wives, generally had a cabin to themselves. On this deck, forward of the cabins, was the troopdeck, which could accommodate 1,500 men, and more on a pinch. Forward of this were quarters for soldiers' wives and children, a hospital and guardroom.

Aft, on the deck below again, were quarters for junior

officers, known as 'Pandemonium'; forward of this were the engine-room, stokehold, bunkers, and ship's stores. Our best speed was a little over 14 knots, not bad for the times. We had only a single screw of four blades, and during one voyage we shed three of them, being finally towed into Suez by the *Jumna*; thence the *Téméraire* towed us to Malta.

There was much to be said against the system, and very little for it. The five Troopers locked up 1,500 officers and men of the Royal Navy who could have been employed advantageously elsewhere.

The military officers were certainly saved a lot of trouble. An officer coming to Bombay, many hundreds of miles from up country, was relieved of all responsibility on arrival on board. The task of billeting the men was performed by the naval people, and the military officer could go and tub, eat and drink at his leisure.

The fact of the ship being a Queen's ship with a well-disciplined crew was an advantage, and such a condition reduced the chance of accident to a minimum. During the period that the system lasted not one vessel was lost. With the military officers to control and take charge of their men, the dangers of fire and collision were considerably modified, and it left the naval people free to deal with matters to which they had been trained and were always prepared for.

The internal arrangements were obsolete and insufficient—no smoking-room or lounge. The *Serapis*, having taken King Edward (when Prince of Wales) to India, had been fitted with a deck-house, and it had been allowed to remain. It was an easy life for the naval people. Two or three trips during the season, which lasted from the autumn to the following spring. We then laid up for the summer, and got plenty of leave.

When I joined, in March, 1881, the ship was starting on her last trip of the season. We left the same afternoon. It was a novel experience for me, and, as I found myself Second-Lieutenant, my sole duties were those of a watch-keeping officer at sea; there were three more to share them. Each trip was very like another, so that if one is outlined it will suffice.

Starting from Portsmouth, we touched at Malta, passed through the Suez Canal, and reached Bombay. Ten days after we reversed the route. Once we went to Queenstown and embarked 1,000 Irish recruits; how frightfully sea-

sick they were! Once we went out via the Cape, and on another occasion we came home that way, calling at Port Elizabeth *en route*. It was the monotony of the trips that wearied me of the life. During my time we crossed the much-dreaded Bay of Biscay over twenty times and never once encountered a gale. It will be realized that we experienced several changes of climate.

The social side was very pleasant. Among so many soldiers and their wives there were many charming people, and friendships were commenced, some of which have lasted to the present day. In the deck-house we had a piano that used to be brought out in the evenings, and we danced and sang. Singsongs for the men generally produced some talent, and at Bombay we parted with mutual regret. I don't think I ever played more whist in my life than when on board this ship. Sometimes a desire for it seizes me again, but it appears to be dead. How is it that ladies could not be induced to play it? Yet they sit down with the utmost confidence to Bridge, which is a much more complicated game.

My first inquiry was what sort of a man Captain Guy O. Twiss was. None of my messmates seemed to know much about him, and he was described as a shy and reserved man. I soon found out that he only wanted to be talked to, and before very long we found out his true value. He was a quiet man with a great sense of humour—one of the class that wrinkles up their eyes when they smile—and we all got quite attached to him. A tall, good-looking man, and well dressed, he carried an air of dignity, consistently considerate and genial ; he was just the man for a Trooper.

Twiss once got a great shock. Passing one of the cabins, he noticed a lady standing with her arms behind her back. He stopped, and in his most suave manner inquired whether he could be of any service to her. "Yes," she replied, flourishing a bottle of stout in his face. "The —— steward won't give me a corkscrew." The steward was justified, for the poor thing was being sent home as a dipsomaniac.

There was a certain amount of state observed at table. The Colonel in Command of troops sat opposite the Captain, the senior lady on the Captain's right, and the next on his left, the next two, in order of seniority, by the Colonel. The others were free to take up the billets they preferred. Most of us made up little parties,

especially if there were some who had travelled with us before. Two ladies once contended as to who should sit on the Captain's right ; finally it was referred to him. With great gravity he announced that it was to be the oldest of the two. This knotty point was settled between them. We parted with Captain Guy Ouchterlony Twiss on the following year with deep regret, and entertained him at a farewell dinner.

His successor did not remain very long. On a return voyage we grounded on the Shambles off Portland, and the ship was on shore for about twenty minutes. The Captain and Navigating Officer were superseded for this.

Captain Archibald Lucius Douglas succeeded, and we soon discovered that his personality was on the same lines as Captain Twiss. He was of a suave nature, and somewhat impulsive, as the following anecdote may illustrate :—

Approaching Suez, while I was sitting on the poop, he ran up to me and said, " Fleet, a child has fallen overboard ; go after him." In obedience to command I ran aft and jumped over the poop-rail, a drop of about 25 feet. On coming to the surface my first thought was that I had an easy job, as a child would not hamper me very much. However, not a sign of the child was visible. I swam about, and saw a boat coming from the ship. On arrival it brought the intelligence that there had been a mistake, and we started back for the ship, where I received an embarrassing ovation from the people who lined the side, still further accentuated when I arrived on board by the greetings of a grateful mother whose child had *not* fallen overboard. It appeared that the nurse had missed him, and had rushed off to the mother and said that he had fallen overboard. The mother was talking to the Captain at the time, hence the above. After I had jumped overboard the child was discovered playing in a part of the ship where he had no business to be. So all was well, except the net result to me, which was one suit of clothes and a watch ruined, as much champagne as was good for me during the rest of the trip, and a Royal Humane Society's Certificate for attempting to save life, which I got through the gratitude of the boy's father, Colonel Sir Reginald Hart, V.C.

It was very hard to avoid the numerous drinks that our kind friends wished us to take with them on disembarkation. At last I hit on a scheme, and instructed the barman to give me a plain soda when I asked for a

gin and soda, which was a common drink. Of course, the gin being colourless, nobody could detect the fraud, and we pledged with mutual satisfaction. It answered capitally, and I was able to avoid getting muzzy. I think the bar was the most up-to-date institution on board ; the wine and spirits were out of bond, and so the drinks were extraordinarily cheap. The troops were allowed a ration of porter while embarked. It was very good, and a lot used to be left over, owing to the men who were seasick refusing it. On such occasions the surplus had to be started overboard ; there was nothing else to be done, although it was shocking waste, and was only resorted to after several cases of drunkenness had occurred among the men who were better sailors.

When the drafts were on board and about to be told off for the various duties, the old soldiers, who had made a trip before, were always anxious to be made 'Swabbers' (that is, men who assisted in keeping the deck dry). It was some time before I discovered the reason for this, which was that such men were the only troops who were allowed in the bluejacket's quarters, where they got a smoke and a snooze in comparative comfort, and an occasional tot of rum as issued in the Navy.

The passage of the canal was a very different affair to what it is now, for it had not been broadened, so ships had to tie up to allow others to pass. Sometimes a block occurred, and a delay of two or three days took place. Now, with the electric lights lighting up the waterway, the trip is often completed in a day, for it is only eighty-six miles, including Lake Timsah, where speed can be increased.

It was not until some time after my joining that we were fitted with steam-steering gear, and going through the canal we had to put as many men as could be accommodated on the hand wheel. These men were kept hard at it until they were a mass of perspiration, and had to be relieved constantly. What a difference the steam-wheel made. We were also fitted with a syren at the same time ; it was a grand toy at first. I had to show a German Princelet round the ship at Portsmouth, and the syren was the only thing he took any interest in. When it was sounded he exclaimed, "Mein Gott! it ees varee goot," and we had to give several encores.

With the numbers of men available the work of tying up was very easy, and our steamboat was always kept

just clear of the water, ready for business. An indignant lady boarded me one morning with a complaint that none of the ladies in the 'Dove Cot' had been able to get up, because a boat full of sailors had been just level with the port-holes. Of course, I apologized and expressed my regret (which indeed I felt), and promised that it should not occur again. But the indignant lady said, "But that is not all." With increasing trepidation I inquired what else had happened. "Why," she replied, "they sang 'Come where my love lies dreaming.'"

The 'Dove Cot' and the Ladies' Cabin were not good arrangements; about twelve were accommodated in the former and rather more in the latter, and the latter often had children with them. The children were a cause of great anxiety at times. For safety they were supposed to be confined to a particular part of the ship, but anyone who knows children must be aware what a difficult proposition that would be. Going through the canal with hawsers being manned and capstans being worked was sometimes a terrifying experience, and the only alternative was to shut them up down below.

The troops were very useful, especially when it came to making sail. You put a party on a rope and told them to run away with it, and they did it with great glee; sometimes they succeeded in 'breaking' it, and then they were delighted. We embarked the Highland Light Infantry at Alexandria for passage home. It had been so often in troopships that the men knew all the different calls on the Boatswain's pipe. They were a splendid lot. Just through a term of Indian service, they had been disembarked for the Egyptian War, and had taken part in the battle of Tel-el-Kebir with great credit. Eighteen months after we took them out to Bombay; nearly all the old soldiers were gone, and they presented quite a different appearance, but a little stay in the East would soon rectify that.

It was always better business to carry a regiment than drafts. The men and officers knew each other in the former case, whereas it was quite understandable that with drafts Captain Jinks of the 'King's Own Tigers' would naturally not take much interest in Private Ullage of the 'Royal Fallbacks.' The best men were the Cavalry and Artillery. Possibly contact with horses and the increased amount of work accounts for this. I was particularly struck with the 13th Hussars that we carried

from Bombay to Port Elizabeth ; it was a grand regiment. The Colonel was Sir Baker Russell, a tall soldierly man, and the complete cavalry man in appearance, behaviour and speech. One of the subalterns was Baden-Powell, founder of the Scouts, the finest institution ever created for boys. He was a cheery soul (as I believe he still is), and of a most agreeable personality.

I am afraid that the bluejacket's ideas of *meum* and *tuum* were somewhat lax, and the soldiers had to look after their kits very closely, for they possessed many articles that were useful to all men ; but what could the poor fellows do when they were down with seasickness and feeling as if they would like to be thrown overboard? An extra blanket was issued to each man for the voyage ; but somehow, when the quartermaster-sergeant called them in, there was always a shortage. They shrank mysteriously in the hot weather when they were not used, and, of course, not missed, and somehow our own men always had more than the regulation number. The unfortunate part of the business was that the troops had to pay for the missing ones. At one of the musters I saw a sergeant do a very smart thing ; the blankets were laid out in bundles, and whenever he was short he doubled up a corresponding number, and as only the end of the blankets were counted, he completely wiped the eye of the surveying officer, and there were no charges in that regiment.

When the 13th was on board, the Colonel asked the Captain whether he objected to the band playing on Sunday. Captain Twiss said, "Certainly not," but he thought that in order to avoid hurting the feelings of any ultra-religious people the programme should be a sacred one. The Colonel agreed, and the band played Handel's Largo, after which we were treated to Offenbach, Rossini, and Waldteufel, the fact being that Baker Russell had discovered that Twiss had no ear for music, and did not know one air from another ; but it was very hard to keep one's gravity.

Among other regiments, we carried the old 'Rough and Toughs' (formerly the 103rd) and the Leicester (formerly the 17th), a fine specimen of a good British Regiment. We brought the latter back from India, and as it was stationed at Portsmouth, I got to know the 'Tigers' very well, and renewed my acquaintance with them in after-years at Halifax and Barbadoes. Shortly after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir we embarked the Buffs

(late 3rd) and the Dorsets (late 39th) for Alexandria. Both of them were at war strength, and with our own crew we had 2,400 men on board. When the regiments paraded four deep, they reached right round the upper deck. On arrival at Malta orders were received to disembark them for passage back to England. The *Serapis* went on to Alexandria, and there we embarked the 21st Punjabis and the 2nd Baluchis for Bombay. They were both fine specimens of their different race, and it was very interesting to note the respect and esteem the men had for their officers. The Punjabis, as a Highland Regiment, had pipers, and the Baluchis a brass band. They did not mix in any way, but kept strictly to themselves. Great preparations had to be made for their cooking, and we shipped stores of Dal, Bhang, and Ghee, and every precaution had to be taken during the cooking that no shadow of a white man defiled it. The Baluchis were the darker men, and wore their hair uncut and coiled up under their turbans. The bluejackets called these men the black regiment, and the others the brown regiment, and got on very well with them, especially the latter, who were much given to skylarking at times.

As it was war-time, the rules of the canal had been abrogated, and the French pilot's services dispensed with, much to their chagrin. We took advantage of the state of affairs, and made a moonlight trip through the canal, thus justifying the motto of the Service which I have placed at the head of this chapter. But the French were very tenacious of their rights, and not over pleased with our financial control of the canal, which we owed to the foresight and statesmanship of Disraeli.

When returning home on this trip, we embarked at Malta an unusual passenger in the shape of an American naval officer, who had been left behind by one of their ships in hospital. He was a very agreeable man, and we had long talks together. Crossing the Bay of Biscay the weather was very thick, and we did not get observations for three or four days ; consequently our position could not be relied upon with too much certainty. We were, however, proceeding at a high rate of speed, and expecting to make Ushant Light at midnight. The Navigating Officer had great confidence in his calculations, which we all shared. I was on the bridge with the others on duty ; suddenly we were joined by our passenger, to whom, being a brother chip, we had given the freedom

of the ship, and he frankly admitted that he was not going to turn in until we had raised the light. Almost to the estimated minute the lookout man on the starboard bow reported a light, and yet we on the bridge did not see it even with our glasses for another ten minutes. It was an extraordinary instance of the keen sight that some of these men are endowed with, for purposely we had not warned him to look out for any particular object. But there it was, and then our passenger expressed himself as satisfied, and with a word of praise for the lookout, went below to turn in. He was Commander Dewey, who afterwards, as Admiral, won great fame at Manila.

We always enjoyed our stay at Bombay, where we were made honorary members of the clubs, of which the well-known Bycullah was one. It was a capital place to spend a quiet Sunday afternoon. My eldest brother was then stationed at Belgaum, and he used to come in and meet me, and together we went to the nearest hill station of Materan.

In the year 1883 an appalling catastrophe took place at Krakatoa, an island in the Straits of Sunda. It is volcanic, and suddenly awoke to activity, annihilating 30,000 people. The explosions were heard hundreds of miles off. For the following two years most extraordinary sunsets prevailed right round the world in the latitudinal region of the disaster. They were caused by dust clouds that circulated round the world until finally dissipated, and were extremely gorgeous at Bombay. The heavens glowed with all shades of red and gold, and the spectacle lasted until darkness set in. The superstitious natives were very alarmed, and flocked out of the city to the Bund, where they worshipped and implored mercy for their sins.

I have mentioned that we lost three blades of our screw and had to be towed to Malta, where we remained in dock until a new one had been fitted. At this time occurred an affair of which I am not particularly proud, but it is given as an instance of British toleration toward a subject people. A party of us went to the Theatre Manoel, and engaged a box, and being rather festively inclined, were somewhat boisterous ; it was merely the ebullition of high (not distilled) spirits. We were rather neglectful of the performance and the audience. The latter resented this, and began to hiss and make the peculiar noises that the excited Maltese indulge in. Finally the performance was stopped, the manager visited

us and an armistice was called, after which the piece was resumed, and we assumed that the incident was closed. Most of the party left, until there was only myself and another. At the conclusion we found a threatening crowd waiting outside for us, but we were instantly surrounded by a bunch of Maltese policemen, who urged us to accept their protection. After a parley, during which we said that if the crowd wanted a scrap it could be accommodated, prudence prevailed ; we yielded, and marched off for the Club in Strada Reale, escorted by the crowd. We passed the police station, and the officer in charge suggested that we should go in until the mob had dispersed. We consented, and this time we were fairly had, for we were informed that we were prisoners. It was so wily that, although very irritated, we could not help being amused. Here we were detained until bailed out by that good old man (who many must still remember) Maritsch, the cigar importer. Next morning we appeared before a Maltese Beak, and were fined three guineas each. The trial was conducted in Maltese, and all we knew of it was through an interpreter. My companion, in his ignorance of etiquette, put his hat on before the judge had left the chair, and was very nearly fined again for contempt of court. The whole affair was a glaring instance of Maltese craft. What the Admiral thought of it may be judged from the comment he made, namely, that "He was glad to know that there were still a few lads of spirit," and he asked me to dinner the next time we passed through.

I cannot resist mentioning an interesting phenomenon of the Arabian Sea that is experienced at times while on the voyage between Aden and Bombay. The sea assumes a milky appearance, and any dark object floating in it becomes very conspicuous. The above is the result of myriads of animalcule, and presumably occurs during the spawning season. The presence of a dark body was very much exemplified when we passed close to a dead whale, that also advertised itself by an odour that would be an easy winner in any stink competition. I have only met with two others at all in the running ; one was a dead camel and the other seven thousand dead Egyptians of Baker Pasha's force, who were routed and killed at Trinkitat, but then it was distributed over a considerable area, as they were slaughtered during their flight.

Baker's catastrophe occurred in February, 1884. The *Serapis* was then on her way home from Bombay with

the York and Lancaster Regiment (late 65th) on board, and off Trinkitat we were stopped by a cruiser and sent in. We found a small army there, among others the Black Watch, the 60th Rifles, Marines and Naval Brigade ; for cavalry, the well-known 10th Hussars ; so the 65th was a welcome addition with its seasoned soldiers.

Two days after, on the 27th of February, 1884, the whole force, under General Sir Gerald Graham, moved out and fought the battle of El Teb. Several of us got permission to accompany the force, which marched in a square formation ; but we had to leave it and remain in a fort three miles out, whence we had a good view of the ensuing battle. The *Sphinx*, lying in the harbour, opened the ball with shrapnel, but the range got too great. It was a stirring sight, and a charge by the 10th Hussars (in which several were killed) afforded an uncommon spectacle. In this affair the tribesmen laid down and tried to spear the horses as they galloped over them ; if they succeeded the rider stood but a poor chance.

The enemy used round shot, and it was very curious to see them rebound off the hard desert like cricket balls. They fought most determinedly. Eventually they were driven off with a loss of 1,500 killed. Our own casualties amounted to about 120.

It was in this battle that Sir Arthur Knyvet Wilson, Bart., and Admiral of the Fleet, won the V.C. He was at the time Captain of the *Hecla*. The Lieutenant of the left gun section of the Naval Brigade had been mortally wounded, and Wilson took his place, fighting several of the Arabs single handed. His sword broke, but he continued to attack them with the broken portion until some men came to his rescue. It was a splendid deed, and characteristic of this resolute man. I had seen him in the morning marching out to join the square, attended by his coxswain, and had been impressed by his business-like look.

The army now moved to Suakim and fought the battle of Tamai, which resulted in another defeat for the Arabs. Thus ended this short but bloody campaign very satisfactorily for us. It is worthy of remark that of six Lieutenants in the Naval Brigade five were killed.

This was the last event of any importance that occurred during my service in the *Serapis*. In June, 1882, I had succeeded the First-Lieutenant, Count Frederick Metaxa,

who had taken up another appointment, so that in the same month of 1885, at which we have arrived, my relief would be appointed. It happened on June 30th, and I bade farewell to my Captain and messmates, trusting to meet most of them in the future, for we had been on the best of terms, and in spite of the monotony of the Service, it had been a pleasant experience on the whole. I used jokingly to tell my friends among the passengers that I was only a first-mate, and the term was consequently adopted by many of them, being shortened to 'The Mate.' As I have stated elsewhere, the military were always most easy to get on with, and with a little tact, and Nelson's blind-eye occasionally with regard to regulations, one's endeavours to ameliorate their lot were usually crowned with success. I invariably found that the military officer was only too ready to carry out the duties assigned to him. It always gave me great pleasure to meet any of these old shipmates again ; but, alas! the number is very limited now.

I was often asked to take out things for people in India, and of course did so. I took out a leash of Irish Greyhounds once, but the limit was reached when a former Captain of mine wrote and asked me to take out a parcel to his brother, a Colonel in the Army. The 'parcel,' on arrival, turned out to be a Phaeton. It was packed in a wooden case, and was so big that it would not go below, and had to be stowed on the forecastle. When we got to sea the Captain asked me what it was, and looked somewhat mystified when I said it was a 'parcel' that I was taking out for Captain Bouncer to his brother. I explained, and as Bouncer was a pal of his, there was no more said.

Some of my readers may think that I could have given them more anecdotes on my trooping experiences. I have refrained, because, although it might have caused merriment to the many, there might still be a minority to whom it would give pain, however much the story might be disguised. For the same reason I have avoided giving names in other instances.

In the month of June an event of great importance to me had occurred ; for on the 23rd I became engaged to be married. My fiancée was Miss A. M. Elliot, who was living in Southsea with her mother, and whom I had known for some time. I shall have more to say when writing of our marriage, which took place on the

24th October, 1887, for we were engaged a little over two years.

After leaving the *Serapis* I went to stay with my future wife's people; but the visit was a very short one; for on the 4th of July my appointment to the *Express* appeared in *The Times*, and the official reached me the following day. I went to the Naval Club to see what the *Express* was and where she was going, and found that she was a gunboat, at present at Plymouth and under orders for the West Coast of Africa. The latter rather took the gilt off the gingerbread, for although it was gratifying to get my first command, it was anything but so to have the West Coast before one; however, I hoped for the best, and to get my promotion out of it.

While I was in the Club a Captain, who knew my fiancée, came in and proceeded to congratulate me. As an old friend of Miss Elliot, he assured me that I was a very fortunate man, and I heartily agreed with him. Then there arrived on the scene another Captain, who was ignorant of my engagement and who was not acquainted with the Elliots (as I knew), and he began to congratulate me upon my new ship. I must here explain that the first man was equally ignorant of my being appointed to the *Express*. The conversation ran on the following lines:—Captain number 2: "I think you are a very lucky fellow." Captain number 1: "So do I, and I've just been saying so." Number 2: "I know her well." Number 1: "So do I." Number 2: "She's a pretty little craft." Number 1: "You're quite right." Number 2: "Yes, she's got a pretty little figurehead, she's neat about the bows, and has a graceful stern." Number 1 looked at us both with horror, hurriedly wished me goodbye, and vanished. Afterwards I explained the matter to him, much to his relief.

CHAPTER XIII

THE *EXPRESS*

Celer et Audax.

My half-pay had only amounted to four days. The irony of it was that a little more would have been acceptable under the circumstances, as may easily be imagined.

However, on joining I found that the ship was to be docked and some necessary defects made good, so, sending in for leave, I returned to Southsea. The *Express* proved to be a very pretty little craft (as my friend the Captain had asserted). She was only 440 tons, was armed with four 4-inch B.L. guns, and carried 100 officers and men, an extraordinarily good complement for so small a ship. She was square-rigged on the foremast, and proved to be quite a good sailer. She was only 400 horse-power.

My predecessor had apparently not taken very much interest in his command, and the general condition of affairs did not please me. I determined to take these matters in hand when we got into blue water. I believe that an Admiralty wag submitted my name for command of the ship as being a very appropriate one for an officer with my name. To maintain the jest, I had the motto that stands at the head of this chapter affixed to the steering wheel, and determined that if we could not live up to the first adjective we would at least justify the second.

My leave passed like a flash, and after a hurried visit to my home a few weeks later found us steaming down Channel for Sierra Leone, via Madeira. We had a fine passage, and on the first day out I had a general muster and made a short speech to the men, the gist of which was that it was my resolve to have a smart ship and a clean one, with the natural consequence of being happy and comfortable. The crew was undoubtedly above the

average, and I felt quite sure was capable of it. My expectations were justified, and three months later I was able to inform the men that they had carried out my intentions in a most satisfactory manner.

At Madeira we found another gunboat, also bound to Sierra Leone, that had left a week before us. The Lieutenant-in-Command called and informed me that he had received a telegram from the Admiralty asking why he had not left, and ordering him to send in his reasons for his delay. This was good enough for me, and I wired to the Admiralty our arrival and a notification that we were leaving in forty-eight hours. My friend cleared out twenty-four hours before we did, but the day before arriving at Sierra Leone we passed him and beat him in by some hours. We were beginning to justify our pretentious motto.

Freetown, Sierra Leone, was at that time known as the "White Man's Grave." It owed its foundation to captured slaves being landed there; their descendants had become a most insolent mob, with extraordinary ideas of their importance. A West Indian Regiment was stationed here, and these men were sufficient to preserve order. The mortality among the white men was appalling, hence the above sobriquet. As may be surmised, no warship stopped longer than was absolutely necessary, and our object in calling was to enter some Krumen for doing necessary work in the sun. These Krumen come from Krutown in Liberia, and are the most industrious hard-working natives on the coast. They are capital fellows, and we got to like ours very much; they are such a contrast to the Freetown natives, who are Mandingans, and a very inferior lot. The true Kruboy has a blue tattooed line down his broad nose and a few more on each upper cheek. They had to be given names, but as most of them had served in British ships already, we only christened one or two. Our headman was 'Seabreeze,' and another was 'Sunrise,' but not all of them rejoiced in such poetical names; for example, we had one named 'Bottle of Beer,' and yet another was 'Jack Nasty Face,' the last rather a libel, for these men have an honest contented look. Most of them spoke 'Pidgin' English. They always messed by themselves on the upper deck, and were never allowed on the messdeck. When one of them misbehaved (a very rare occurrence), the Head Kruman inflicted punishment that went by the name of

'Fum-Fum,' and was administered with a rope's end. They did all the boat-work in the daytime, and kept the outside of the ship clean. I never saw the Kruboys at any devotions, and I don't believe they have any religion. One of my brother Captains tried a little proselytizing, and to assist it sent up to Krutown (the ship's name for their quarters) a couple of turkeys on Christmas Day. The next day he sent for their headman. "Well, Tom-jim, what is Christmas Day?" "One day fill um belly, Capen," was the unexpected answer. The Captain tried another tack. "Who died for you?" This was still easier. "Two turkeys, Sah."

Our next port was Elmina, an old Dutch Fort that had passed through the hands of the Portuguese to us. It was the headquarters of the Hausa force, where recruits were entered and trained. Here I found three officers in residence. It is one of the few places on the coast where there is an easy landing place, most of the others being on an open beach with a formidable surf. About ten miles to the Eastward is Cape Coast Castle, and here was a small garrison. It is almost as bad a station as Sierra Leone, and there was literally nothing to be done but count the hours. Both these castles are very picturesque, and looked well from the sea. From the anchorage of the latter one sees a huge central tower, its angles rounded off with towers and battlements, turrets and curtains, bastions and roofs standing all pell-mell below. The main courtyard, protected by a portcullis and gate tower, is triangular. Here is the tomb of L.E.L. (Letitia Elizabeth Landon), the poetess, who came here in 1838 with her husband, the Governor, and who was found dead in her room not long afterwards. A mystery that was never solved.

There is a mysterious fascination about this place. It has served as a base for several expeditions. The only reminiscence of the last one was a large surplus of Government rum that could be purchased for a shilling a gallon. Apparently it did not occur to the authorities that it might be shipped home and a handsome profit made on it. The immediate natives are Fantis, an unwarlike tribe, and only fit to act as carriers.

The whole of the coast was gloomy, mysterious and unhealthy. Probably things are better now, and with modern hygienic discoveries the toll of life has become

less than when we were there from 1885 to 1887. But the fact remains that it is not a white man's country; very few escape disease of some sort, and the few that do survive are known as 'Salted,' and are valuable servants to their employers.

Cape Coast Castle, being on the Gold Coast, leads us to the precious metal. There is gold in the country, no doubt, and the natives know where to get it. They bring it in in quills, and use it for barter, but I imagine that it is not in sufficient quantities to justify the white man incurring the risks of working for it. There are some very good native workers, and I purchased a beautiful bracelet made by one of them. It is highly artistic, and has a good deal of filigree work about it and finely wrought leaves and flowers. It is known as the 'Queen's Pattern,' and I believe one was presented to Her Majesty. The purchase price was always the number of British sovereigns that balanced it in the scales. They also make a lot of silver ornaments, and their rings with the signs of the zodiac inscribed are well known.

The manner of landing on the coast, rendered necessary by reason of the surf, that varies in force according to the depth of the water, is in a craft known as a surf-boat. The sea is comparatively shallow for a long distance out, and billows up into ridge-like formations that break in a most dangerous fashion as they approach the beach. In some places there is a succession of these ridges with comparative smooth between. Thus having negotiated the first ridge, the surf-boat watches for a favourable opportunity, and at the psychological moment tackles the next one.

The surf-boats are largish craft with bow and stern alike. The crew of ten or twelve men sit on the gunwale and propel the boat with paddles; the steersman (known to the crew as the boatswain) stands at the stern and steers with an oar. The men are quite experienced at this work, and an accident is extremely rare. It was said that if they wished to do so a capsize was easily arranged. One did occur during my time, and a very unpopular official was drowned.

The experience of landing was most exhilarating. After taking your place in the boat the crew shove off and paddle away at random, reserving themselves for more strenuous work. On approaching the surf serious business commences, and the crew strike up a chant,

keeping time with the paddles ; the boatswain takes the solo part, and the crew joins in the refrain, all of them striking the water at the commencement of it. By this they get great momentum on the boat, which is maintained until the next stroke. Thus :—Boatswain : "Manowah, he come again, he come again, he come again." Chorus : "Ho, canoeman" (all paddles strike the water). Boatswain : "Capen, he come again, he come again, he come again." Chorus : "Ho, canoeman." And so on, *da capo* The boatswain varies his theme and improvises freely, especially if he thinks he has a complaisant fare. These men are humorous and kindly enough if treated properly. My plan was to promise them a bottle of trade gin if they got me on shore dry, and it always answered. Anything over the established fare was called a 'Dash' in coast parlance. Having informed the boatswain of the intended 'Dash,' it would of course be alluded to in the chant, and you would hear yourself described as "Manowah Capen, he velly good man." Sometimes I exercised my own talent as an Improvisatore, to the intense enjoyment of the crew.

On approaching the first line of surf, paddling is suspended, and the boatswain takes stock. An intense silence prevails among the crew, and he keeps the boat pointed for the beach, surveying the sea over his shoulder. Suddenly he gives a signal as a huge roller comes along, and the paddles strike the water simultaneously with great force. The roller overtakes us, lifts the boat, and we career along at great speed for a considerable distance, then it outpaces us. We sink into a watery valley, and the men hold the boat steady again. Another one succeeds, and we repeat the operation. Now comes the third and most dangerous roller ; all hands look business, and the paddles are gripped with determination. Suddenly you are flying along again, and this time you land with a tremendous bump on the shore. Two boys seize you, and you are carried up the beach at a run and deposited on your feet, to the great relief of your olfactory nerves, for these gentry look upon washing as a superfluous luxury. The only clothing they indulge in is a loin-cloth. I presented the boatswain at Accra with an old tall hat that he wore in a most rakish manner and with evident enjoyment. He became quite devoted to me after this most unusual dash.

It will be readily understood that going on shore at

most of these places was only indulged in when absolutely necessary. Thus the men never got on shore in the Bights or the Gold Coast, and were confined to the ship for months. All this was very trying for the officers, and still more so for the men. Add to this the constant rolling of the ship, and life on the West Coast was no sort of a gilt-edged proposition. There was also malarial fever to be guarded against, and whenever we went up a river the crew had to have five grains of quinine, twice daily. Much to my amusement the Kruboys insisted upon having it too.

We arrived at Accra, some distance to the Eastward of Cape Coast Castle, and the headquarters of the Government. The first question the Governor asked me when I called on him was, "Have you brought your bag?" Naturally I had not, and he insisted on my sending for it, and staying with him during the time the ship was in port. It was a most acceptable change, and the invitation remained good for future visits, for this kind-hearted man was most hospitable, and I owed a great deal to Sir Brandford Griffiths, a man with much colonial experience, and a very interesting man to talk with.

The official residence was Christianborg Castle, formerly the property of the Danes. Built on a promontory, it was washed on three sides by the sea; on the fourth it was strongly fortified, and the drawbridge was hauled up at night by the Hausa guard. On the rocks below were the old Danish guns that had been dismounted and tumbled over the walls. The quarters were excellent, and the Governor kept as good a table as the resources of the region allowed. His A.D.C. lived in the Castle, and we were often joined by the Colonial Secretary. The latter was an old coast bird, and had many curious tales to relate, one of which I made use of in my former publication, *An Admiral's Yarns*.

Accra is one of the few places on the coast where horses are immune from the tsetse fly, so one got a few drives. I also made an attempt to shoot, but game was scarce. My companion—one of the colonial officers—completely collapsed, and I had some trouble in getting him back. However, nothing daunted by my failure at Accra, I tried other places, but with poor results, and on several occasions I nearly trod on snakes; luckily they were as anxious to get out of my way as I was of theirs. These creatures abound, and the natives do not kill them,

regarding them with great awe, and probably worshipping them.

Superstition is rife on the coast in spite of the missionaries. I don't think these men take things very seriously. One gentleman we found living in tents on the Congo was doing himself very well, especially in the wine and food department, but there was no sign of converts.

Most of the natives offer up their devotions to a Fetish of some sort, and anything more hideous than the majority of them cannot be conceived. It is impossible to conjecture what rites are conducted, and what offerings are made to these idols. When shooting at Accra I came across a disgusting specimen that was covered with blood, feathers and rags ; it was evidently very popular. The Kruboy who was with me was quite overcome with awe, and followed me closely until the gruesome object had been left far behind. I have one in my possession, however, that is almost a work of art. It is a wooden figure about 18 inches high, carved to represent a woman in a sitting attitude with a child on her knees ; the effect is not wholly unpleasing. Here we see, probably, a tradition of a virgin birth, although it may be a mere coincidence. The wood is very hard, and is stained black in certain parts, and the eyes are small pieces of glass. I often speculate as to what sacrifices have been made to it.

There is in connection with the above a form of superstition known as Juju. By putting Juju on anything you confer a curse upon anyone attempting to steal or interfere with it. You simply Jujued any old thing, hung it up, and it did the rest. A useful custom, and one that we might adopt with advantage in some so-called civilized countries.

The Fetish priests act as doctors, and undoubtedly exercise great power. When a man commits a crime he can escape punishment if he can square the priest, for the latter has to administer a dose of poison to the suspected person, and his guilt is determined by the result. If he vomits it he is considered innocent, if he dies he is guilty. It is understandable that a good bribe by the culprit will ensure immunity. Near Cabinda I came across a group that sat in a circle around a man who had just taken his dose, and who was being regarded most curiously by the remainder. Somehow it reminded me of Job and his friends. He looked at me most pathetically ; probably

he was not sure whether he had dashed the priest sufficiently. His face was ashen, and he had all the appearance of a doomed man, but I had no wish to remain and witness his demise or the other operation, so I passed on and left the court still sitting.

Another quaint custom that prevails is that any unfortunate woman presenting her husband with twins is put to death, together with the offspring. I believe that they have got it into their heads that the woman must have committed adultery to get two children, hence this drastic punishment. What would they say to some of our triplet cases?

At Accra a good deal of trade is carried on. Calling on a man with whom I had become acquainted, I was confronted in his sitting-room by a leopard, that approached and began rubbing itself against me. I did not enjoy it much, and called out to my friend. He replied, telling me to stand quite still (which you may be sure I did) until he came in. He entered, and seizing the animal, marched it off, much to my relief. It seemed rather a dangerous sort of pet to have about loose.

Continuing Eastward, we arrived at Jellah Coffee, where we found plentiful supplies of fowls and turkeys and great stores of eggs ; the latter buried in the sand and dug up on the arrival of the warship. This place is situated on a sandy spit, and was the hottest place we visited ; the temperature was 137 degrees in the daytime and 90 at night. As may be imagined, we did not stop very long.

A few miles to the Eastward is Quittah, where a company of Hausas, with two officers, was stationed. I found the officers breathing fire and sword against the natives, and our arrival was hailed as a valuable reinforcement. On investigation it did not appear to me that it was a matter that called for action, certainly of the sort contemplated, and I induced them to see it in the same light. The affair was eventually settled at a palaver held by the Governor, the offenders being fined ; thus bloodshed was avoided. Any punitive expedition would have been a very onesided affair, muzzle-loading gas-pipes and spears against Martini-Henrys and Gatlings are at a heavy discount. Here I had my first go of malarial fever, and my recovery was considerably expedited by the kindness of these officers, who supplied me with milk (a great luxury), turkeys, eggs and fruit. The turkeys

are little bigger than an ordinary fowl, and the fowls about the size of a pigeon.

Palavers were most amusing affairs, but being very official, all merriment had to be carefully suppressed, yet it was difficult to preserve one's gravity on the arrival of the Kings and Chiefs. A negro, however exalted his rank, in a gold-laced coat over a loin-cloth, perhaps gold-laced trousers, perhaps not, and sometimes with bare feet, his woolly head crowned with a cocked hat or a silk one, was an object that appealed to anyone with a sense of humour. A retainer in attendance carefully held an umbrella over his master's head.

These palavers were held out of doors for obvious reasons. A general air of solemnity prevailed. The Governor, who was the last to arrive, took his seat on the biggest and most ornamental chair, and the Chiefs were allowed to sit on each side, according to rank, for which they are great sticklers, the whole forming a semi-circle. The Interpreter stood in front of the Governor, and in the foreground was the general public. When all was ready the Interpreter announced, "Palaver Set," and the proceedings commenced, generally by a formal indictment on the part of the Governor of the offenders, laid on pretty hot, his speech being translated by the Interpreter. Then the offenders were called upon for their replies and excuses, if they had any, and after a summing up by the Governor, he delivered judgment and the proceedings terminated. There was always a guard of Hausas in attendance, and a warship off the beach was an excellent trump card.

These Hausas are men recruited from a district in British Nigeria. They are of medium height and black complexion, and represent the highest type of negro ; they have long had a native civilization. They make admirable soldiers, being of great physical strength, and are cool and brave in action. A great majority hold the faith of Islam.

We now visited the oil rivers in succession ; here were kings galore. The great game of grab had just been played by the Powers, and our energetic Consul Hewitt had done very well for his country in the way of treaty-making with the said kings. We shipped him two or three times for conveyance to different places. I was much struck by the tact and firmness displayed by this competent official in his dealings with the natives.

The coast round the Niger and the oil rivers is terribly monotonous, flat and uninteresting. Inside the rivers it is still more depressing, until higher reaches are gained. The mangroves, with their slimy roots and impenetrable masses of jungle, are no relief to sandy beaches with an occasional palm tree. Farther up, the country is better; the mangroves disappear and the country is drier, hilly and wooded. I found this to be notably so on going up to Old Calabar on the river of that name. There we found a most respectable king with a town of a better class than usual.

There was always interest and amusement in looking up kings. The affair usually commenced by the king sending off a dash in one of his canoes, fruit, fowls, eggs, and sometimes a goat. I invariably declined with grateful thanks. The idea of being under an obligation to a negro of however exalted rank was not palatable, but I sent word that I would look him up after he had paid me a visit. This never failed to bring off the dusky potentate, who invariably came in great state. A large canoe, sometimes with twenty paddles, with, of course, a shelter for the royal personage, who, equally of course, was clothed in a weird costume, brought the visitor. When he arrived on board we had a powwow on the quarterdeck. I never liked to have them in my cabin. Then, after partaking of a whisky or rum, we fixed up the time for a return visit. Natives live in huts called 'Shinbacks,' but their majesties usually had a superior residence, almost a Buckingham Palace compared to the others, where they accumulated an extraordinary collection of European articles, cheap and nasty, as provided by the traders in exchange for ivory, rubber, oil and skins. China ornaments are great favourites (but that is a sort of world cult) and these were of the commonest kind. One king had on his sideboard an article of everyday use that is generally carefully hidden from sight. I suppose he thought it was a quaint drinking jug or salad bowl!

The king then heaped coals of fire on one's head by producing champagne, but it was wise to take a pass, for trade champagne is as bad as trade gin; both dope of the very worst kind, no knockout drops required.

These men had an extraordinary amount of conceit, which is not surprising when it is realized what power they hold over their subjects, but they had to be gently and

firmly corrected when they endeavoured to assume a grade only a little inferior to Queen Victoria.

One of my brother officers, much given to practical jokes, after being associated for some time with one of these kings had got wearied by his pretensions. At length he announced that Queen Victoria had conferred on the king the order of the Q.H.B., and had ordered him to bestow it on the first opportunity. Of course that was soon made, and in the presence of a great crowd, and with much pomp and ceremony, the installation took place, and a very creditable ornament, fashioned by the ship's armourer out of a sheet of copper, decorated by the painter, and attached to a length of silk ribbon, was hung round the gratified king's neck. The accolade was duly given by my friend, and the king was solemnly installed as a Q.H.B., or "Queen's Hard Bargain."

The most interesting event in connection with kings that occurred to me was a royal ballet given in my honour. Leaving the ship very early, I started with a trader for the scene of action. Each of us was carried by two natives in hammocks slung on a long pole, the ends of which rested on their heads. The distance was about eight miles through jungle and bush, and under a hot sun, yet these men never rested ; the going was bad in some places, but not once did a man stumble. The king received us with much ceremony, and had evidently got into his glad rags ; they took the form of Manchester cloths, disposed round him in toga fashion. He was surrounded by a large family, several wives, sons and daughters, likewise clean and spruced up. I have seen it stated that negroes and negresses are never good-looking, but that is not by any means always the case. These people have not all got thick lips, broad noses and sooty complexions. I have seen some of both sexes who would hold their own anywhere, their colour being of a light copper. The wool is a bit of a handicap to a dusky belle, but they arrange it most artistically, and they have lots of spare time for embellishment. They almost invariably have splendid teeth and a fine carriage (there is no need for a Turveydrop among these ebony Venuses), the result of carrying everything from an empty bottle to a heavy load upon their heads.

We arrived in time for the mid-day meal, but mindful of my companion's advice, I became, for the nonce, a vegetarian as well as a teetotaler. After this we were

treated to the spectacle of a dance by the Royal Corps de Ballet.

The king sat on a raised dais, and we occupied seats on his right and left ; his wives and family were grouped around us, the court officials being included among them. In front were the dancers, and the proletariat formed a dense ring of interested spectators.

About fifty damsels took part in the ballet, the music for which was supplied by a band of performers on tomtoms and reed instruments. The ladies were no more of the Genée or Pavlova school than the band was of the Dan Godfrey class, but what they lacked in skill they made up for in energy. They swayed, wriggled, and executed a sort of balance step without gaining ground. Without doubt I saw the original Jazz!

I shall not attempt to describe the costumes worn by these Coryphées. It is sufficient to say that there is no Stage Censor on the West Coast, and that no expense had been incurred beyond the demands of decency. We endured the performance until we could make our adieux without hurting the feelings of the monarch, and having expressed our gratification through the Interpreter we set out on our return to the coast, having added another peculiar experience to our repertoire.

From the rivers we went to Fernando Po, a Spanish Island, and from thence to Prince's Island (Portuguese) and Anno Bom (Spanish). The first of these impressed us most unfavourably, for it rained continuously, a habit of that place, I believe ; it seems to rain all the year round. Before going on to Prince's Island we embarked Vice-Consul H. H. Johnston (afterwards Sir Harry) for passage to the Cameroons. This short trip introduced us to quite a different class of scenery. The Cameroon mountains, with an altitude of 14,000 feet, present a fine spectacle, and the whole district was a distinct change for the better after the level monotony of the Gold Coast. We disembarked Mr. Johnston, and went to Prince's Island. The services of the above distinguished man are well known. Even at that time he had made his mark, and can be instanced as an example of the manner in which our Empire is quietly and unobtrusively served by its sons abroad.

The Germans had only lately annexed (by purchase) the Cameroons, and were having anything but a good time with the natives, who were not at all pleased with

the transaction. They would have infinitely preferred to be under the British, and one chief remarked to me, "Who are the Germans, they have only one Manowah?" The negotiations had been carried out by Nactigal in the *Moeve*.

The same discontent prevailed in Anno Bom, where I was informed that they wanted to be Queen Victoria's men. It was only by promising that I would represent the matter in the right quarter that I got any peace. It was difficult to make them understand that we had no quarrel with Spain, and so could not turn the priests and officials out.

Prince's Island was quite delightful after all these worries, although being almost on the line it is a trifle on the warm side. The island seemed prosperous, and it appeared to me that the labour problem had been satisfactorily solved (from the employers' point of view) by giving the smallest modicum of wages or none at all.

All these Spanish and Portuguese places are well provided with churches, some of them quite fine buildings. That is undoubtedly the first aim of the priesthood, and the natives are squeezed with that object. But among the laymen there was not much respect for religion ; later, at St. Paul de Loanda, I was shocked by the conduct of some of them who took me to see one of these edifices. They went into the vestry and, taking out the vestments, proceeded to perform a mass with comic interludes, the priest meanwhile looking on with great tolerance. At Anno Bom the interior of the church was used as a burial ground.

After the islands we arrived at Libreville, on the Gabun River. This place, in the hands of the French, was quite a decent settlement, and the natives were kept in thorough good order. The Governor was Capitaine de Vaisseau, Pradier. He was a charming specimen of his country, and used to send me presents of legumes (a rarity on the coast). There were three French warships in port, and when the Captains paid their official visits one of them turned out to be an old friend of *La Touche Treville* days. He came over the side, recognized me, and before I had time to realize it, kissed me on both cheeks. Of course I glared round to see if any of my men were amused by this unusual salute, but they all preserved their gravity, although it must have been a source of merriment later. My old friend invited us to

spend an evening on board his craft, and we did so with much enjoyment. The wardroom had an excellent piano, and they were kind enough to sing us some English songs (at least they said they were), and in return I sang a French one (at least I said it was), and we all parted the best of friends.

Perhaps some of my readers might like to know what we did to while away the monotony of the life at some of the most uncivilized places when we were unable to go on shore. Realizing before I left England that I was likely to have a good deal of spare time on my hands, I laid in a large stock of wools, canvas, and patterns, and in the course of my two years on the coast accumulated quite a store of mantelpiece borders, cushion covers, and curtain borders, all of which came in very useful when setting up house. The men were never idle, and did a lot of worsted work also. In those days the bluejacket made and repaired his own kit, was expert with the needle, and turned out a lot of fancy work.

From Libreville we went to the Ogowe River, and took up an anchorage off the right bank. On the left, at the mouth of the river, is Cape Lopez, and this part of the country is said to be a famous locality for elephants. It was reported that a herd of these animals had been seen there quite lately ; indeed, that an officer of a warship had recently shot one. We learned the truth later, when it transpired that while out shooting an officer had suddenly come upon one, and in a moment of temporary aberration let drive a charge of number five at it. Luckily the elephant was equally surprised, and so departed without taking toll. We organized a hunt, but without success. I was disappointed at the time, but am now glad that I did not shoot one of these noble animals simply to gratify a lust to kill. Old age brings more merciful feelings.

We had an interesting experience here. The natives undoubtedly have a system of telegraphing from tribe to tribe. It is done by means of drums, and presumably a code is used. We arrived in the evening, and the drums woke up immediately in our neighbourhood. We could hear them respond in the far distance, and although we did not know for certain, we suspected what was going on. This was confirmed the next day when a trader came off and told us that our arrival had been made known a long way up country. It was a hot, still night,

and the sound of these drums carried a great distance, beside having a weird effect.

Then Southward for the Congo, calling at various factories, as the trading establishments are called, such as at Mayumba, Loango and Landana, the two former being in French territory, the second being another good specimen of their parental care. Mayumba and Landana are merely factories on the beach with a few native huts around and the bush for a background. The former place was the scene of a sad catastrophe a year or so before our arrival. A party of five officers from a warship started up the river on a shooting excursion, and one of them badly wounded a hippopotamus ; the enraged animal charged the boat and capsized it. The result was that three of them were drowned. Some say that the hippo drowned them ; others that they could not reach the bank because of a thick fringe of weeds. I think the latter most probable. I visited their graves, and was glad to see that they had been kept in order by the trader, their bodies having been recovered and buried close by the factory.

At Landana the trader invited us to go for a shooting trip up the river. We went in a large boat paddled by a dozen natives. Mindful of the Mayumba tragedy, shooting at hippos was tabu, and although we saw some, they were not disturbed. Some alligators were shot, and we thus got a little practice, but unless killed outright these creatures manage to get into the water. After paddling about sixteen miles we landed for lunch, and enjoyed an alfresco meal, which we cooked ourselves on a sandy but shaded spit of sand. Several times natives appeared on the banks and greeted us with shouts of "Mandili" (white men), but they could not be induced to approach us ; possibly they thought we had come to procure some free labour.

The traders led a very solitary life. There were three of them, and there was nothing for them to do beyond attending to barter. The only excitement was the arrival of an occasional steamer to take away the produce. It must be very lucrative to the companies, for the articles which the native gets in exchange for his products are of the shoddiest description, and as I have said, the trade gin, which they have a great liking for, is of the most death-dealing quality.

One of the traders told me that they used to keep

a boa to destroy the rats that infested the building. A native boy was in the habit of teasing the creature, and although warned about it, he continued to do so. The trader was sitting in the store one afternoon and his attention was drawn by hearing the boy scream. He was just in time to see the boa disengage itself from the boy, who he had crushed to death.

Thence to Kabinda, a small port to the Northward of the Congo, a nice little place with a safe anchorage and several factories with some most hospitable traders. It was comparatively cool, and with the aid of the stream anchor and cable we kept the ship broadside on to the breeze. This place was largely used by American whalers, and there were five of them at anchor when we paid our first visit. They were the last of a rapidly disappearing class. Short, stumpy craft, with a broad beam and good stowage, they looked like the camel of the sea, but their odour was of a camel that had been defunct for some time. One of the masters had his wife on board ; it is surprising that she could stand it, but she seemed rather to enjoy the life.

The natives here were quite a superior lot, and are considered to make the best boys on the coast. Rather light in complexion, they are of pleasant appearance, and many of both sexes are quite good-looking.

At last we had arrived at the mighty and mysterious Congo, and we called at Shark's Point before entering the river. At this place, with the ill-omened name, we found a small cemetery of naval people who had died in this unhealthy region, a sad and melancholy sight, and one that brought home the realization of how little this was a white man's country.

The Congo flows out in an uninterrupted mighty stream, and its dark waters can be plainly discerned a hundred miles at sea. A bugbear of the coast was the Tornado. "Beware the Tornado" was one of the first warnings dinned into our ears. They were supposed to be frequent in the region of the Congo, but we must have been lucky, for we only encountered one during our stay on the coast. It gave plenty of warning, in the shape of a huge black arch approaching slowly at a considerable distance. We had plenty of time to snug down, after which we awaited the onslaught. It came, and for a quarter of an hour it blew a hurricane, with a heavy rain obligato. Having passed over us without damage, the

weather resumed its usual aspect, and we made sail again, none the worse. A more permanent annoyance was the Harmattan, a hot wind from the Eastward, permeated with desert sand. It is irritating beyond belief ; dries up and ruins your books and cracks all the woodwork ; in fact, is most destructive.

From Shark's Point to Banana Creek is only a short trip. The latter anchorage inside the right bank of the river is one of the chief Portuguese settlements. Here was quite a sprinkling of factories, and several English and Scots in charge. We got coal and supplies of most kinds, and the creek being well protected, lay in comfort. Occasional steamers put in an appearance, and there was a river service to Boma, Vivi, and other places as far as the cataracts. On our last visit we anchored some distance up the river with the idea that the fresh water might bring off the barnacles and weeds that had accumulated on the ship's bottom. It was a gloomy experience, mangroves as far as the eye could reach, and dense jungle, not a sign of life. A turbid forbidding river always flowing in the same direction, the only relief being the rare appearance of a canoe that, issuing from the mangroves, seemed to make a brief reconnaisance before retiring.

Working South, we fetched up at St. Paul de Loanda. This is a beautiful anchorage protected from the sea by a natural breakwater, a long arm of land that starts out from the town and then runs parallel to the shore for some miles. The head of the bay has become much silted up with sand, and ships have to lie some distance off the town. The same misfortune has overtaken the town, and the streets are more than ankle-deep with sand ; thus walking is most fatiguing and unpleasant. It is a serious catastrophe, for the town is of fair size, well situated, and contains some good buildings. Here we found a small colony of our countrymen and a Vice-Consul, all most kind and hospitable. The Firm extended an open invitation to dine with them, of which we frequently availed ourselves. Food is one of the greatest problems on the coast, and one does get tired of tinned goods. The fresh meat is of a very poor quality, and sometimes I used to wonder what we were eating. The meat might have been monkey, and the bird might have been parrot. I have no doubt it sometimes was the case, but where ignorance is bliss it is better not to inquire. One item

was always good, namely, the Vino Tinto, which came from Portugal.

Here there were Portuguese warships and a small navy yard, some troops, and a Governor with many officials. Abreast of our anchorage was an old fort. It had become obsolete, and was used as a prison. In the oubliettes were confined the prisoners who were in for life. They did not survive very long, for the foundations were below water level, and the sea entered freely. Death must have been a happy release. The navy had a great opinion of itself. I have noticed a curious fact in the course of my career, namely, that the ships of all navies have a distinct and personal odour that seems to cling to and typify them. It was very prominent in the Portuguese, and may be described as garlicy. The American is biscuit and cheese, the German beer, and the French red wine. I wonder what ours is! I should incline to rum. We had any amount of parrots and monkeys as pets. I owned a very clever bird. He could stand on his head, lie down and pretend to be dead, and had an extensive repertoire. His cage was always brought on deck, and I used to sit and talk to him while smoking, and once I became aware of a monkey making an insidious approach. He got close to the cage and spotted me watching, and I could have sworn he winked at me. When within reaching distance he helped himself from the parrot's food. George (the parrot) viewed this proceeding with great disfavour, but he was not taking any risks, and lagered himself in the middle of the cage, safe from the monkey's paw. The latter helped himself again. This was too much for George, and he spluttered out, "Oh, you rascal!" The monkey fled, and I could have sworn the parrot winked at me. The remarkable part of the affair was that George had never used the phrase before, but I had often said it to him with the hope that he might adopt it. Apparently he thought that the right time had come for him to do so.

At Loanda we were honoured with a visit by the flagship, during which we were inspected with very good results, for on leaving the Admiral told me that he had sent in my name for promotion. The little craft was really in a very satisfactory condition, and on any other station service in her would have been a pleasure. My officers and men were most loyal, and I owed a great deal to them for backing up my endeavours so whole-

heartedly. At drill we were very smart, and I used to take her out under sail and cruise about to keep them up to the mark and make them fit as well. It paid. She was remarkably handy, and in smooth water would tack as easily as a fore-and-after. One of our evolutions was to shift the foretopsail in stays, an evolution that I had never seen done before or since. But as I have said, we had a big crew for such a small craft.

Our Admiral, Sir Walter Hunt Grubbe, was an old coast bird ; a fine officer, and a good man to serve under if you fitted your job. Fond of a joke and a song, he was very hospitable. On the night of the inspection I dined with him, and on leaving asked if he would come on board the *Express* the next day on his way on shore, when landing for his afternoon walk, and partake of a cocktail. He consented (I believe I had rather a reputation as a mixer) ; on his arrival we partook. He asked me the name of it. It had not got one, so I said, " I hope you will allow me to call it the ' Hunt Grubbe. ' " Much amused, he gave his consent. Alas, I have forgotten how to make it.

He told me a curious story of an event that occurred on the coast during his early service. An officer commanding a steam vessel, on arriving at a certain port, found a sailing brig, the commanding officer of which was senior to him. The two dined together on the brig, and on parting the junior announced his intention of leaving the next morning, to which the other replied that he would not give him permission. Accordingly, when the former asked permission to part company in the usual manner it was refused, whereupon, disregarding it, he proceeded to sea. The other then opened fire on him, to which he replied until out of range. Whether the shooting was intentionally bad or not I cannot say, but there were no casualties. The sequel was that the C.O. of the brig reported the occurrence by letter to the Admiral, who duly received it and held it for the arrival of the brig before taking action. But the unfortunate craft sailed and was never heard of again, and it became apparent that she had been lost with all hands. The survivor rose to be an officer of rank and distinction.

Another affair occurred in Simon's Bay. A ship ' Manned and Armed Boats,' and proceeded to make a sham attack upon another that was coaling. This was resented, and the men ' Repelled Boarders ' with lumps

of coal. A free fight ensued, that was only stopped by the officers with great difficulty.

The flagship departed, and getting tired of Loanda we started for a cruise farther South, our *point d'appui* being Benguella, about 180 miles distant. On the way we called in at Elephant Bay. It is an uninhabited spot, and will not be found on the map. The country around is wild and inhospitable. As we steamed into the bay a most unusual spectacle presented itself, for on the beach we saw a herd of twenty-six zebras, all gazing with great curiosity at the strange object approaching. As we drew nearer they got uneasy, and retreated up the beach. The absolute stillness was broken by the plunge of the anchor and the rattle of the cable ; this seemed to scare them. They made off and disappeared in the scrub, finally coming into sight again moving off over the encircling ridge. It was a charming sight.

The country round this region is frequented by lions, and a predecessor of mine shot two that he came across at a small and muddy pool a little distance inland. Most of the wild animals of the district seemed to visit this pool for water, but although I camped out at night in its vicinity I had no luck. Plenty of birds, but we could not risk alarming nobler game by firing at them. On the hills that encircle the bay were the names of many warships that had visited the place ; they were done in large whitewashed stone letters, and were easily decipherable many miles off. The *Express* was duly added. The bay swarmed with fish. We kept our seine net on the beach, and sent a party on shore every morning to haul it and provide a welcome breakfast.

Round the North cape of the bay, in an oasis, was a station owned by a Portuguese. Water was there in sufficient quantity to grow palms, cocoa trees and other produce. We had been told of the owner, and on the second day his boat rounded the point and boarded us. We found him quite a good specimen of a Portuguese. He brought with him a dictionary and we communicated by its means. He showed me letters and souvenirs from former Captains who had visited him ; the latter were invariably cigarette cases, and he had quite a collection. He invited us to spend a night with him, and three of us went next day. It was quite a large place, with several hundred 'Hands,' and it seemed to me that here again labour was remarkably cheap, to put it mildly. The

Overseer was a truculent-looking fellow, and there was a number of huge dogs of indeterminate breed ; each one wore an iron collar studded with spikes. They were described as being useful to keep off lions. I had my doubts. However, that night the place seemed to be infested with lions, and during the small hours we could hear them roaring all round our quarters. The end of our host was a distressing affair. He had opened a keg of gunpowder, and in a careless mood seated himself on it while smoking a cigarette. A tremendous explosion ensued that literally blew him to pieces.

I have completed an average itinerary of a warship stationed on the West Coast ; it may be taken as representing a year's cruising. Usually a ship found orders at Loanda to proceed to the Cape in order that the crew might recuperate and get some leave, but such luck never came our way. Instead, we were ordered to St. Helena and Ascension, thence to Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast and so on, *da capo*.

To reach St. Helena we steamed to latitude 16 degrees South, which is that of the island. We then made sail to the S.E. trade, set the topmast studding-sail and steered on a wind for the island, distant about 1,100 miles.

The island is like a huge haystack, and stands up boldly from the sea. There is only one anchorage and landing. One of the small boys asked me what sort of a place England was, and if it had a good landing! The anchorage is visited by heavy rollers, probably caused by submarine earthquakes. This landing is at Jamestown. It lies at the foot of a ravine running into the interior, that gradually ascends until it joins the plateau above. The roads are cut out of the sides, and one gets a pretty view of the town from the top. Having got inside the haystack you discover a country that is pleasing to the eye, and an immense relief after the sandy coast of Africa. There is a legend that the place was taken by the Navy. Men were landed on the opposite side, and they climbed up at a place called 'Hold-fast Tom,' where the climb can still be accomplished by the aid of ropes. I visited the spot, but did not compete.

The highest point of the island is 3,000 feet, and the population (mostly coloured) number about 4,000. There is little doing beyond farming and gardening, but there was in my time an industry that consisted in making feather trimmings, and I purchased some very good specimens.

Here we found a small garrison quartered on one of the heights overlooking the town and anchorage, of which a very pretty and comprehensive view is obtainable from the officers' mess, built on the extreme edge. The height is known as 'Ladder Hill,' and access to it is by a zigzag road or a ladder of 660 steps. Most pedestrians preferred the road; I did. But the gamins of the town will undertake to run up and down without stopping for a small sum, and I saw them do it several times.

Our men had a good deal of money to burn, and some of them got through it pretty quickly. Anticipating the above, I had made them draw out what money they wanted before arriving, and I firmly refused any more withdrawals. It was probably unpopular at the time, but a few days at sea convinced them of the wisdom of it, and they were glad to think it was still there. An open gangway was declared during our stay, and I removed myself to Longwood, where there were some comfortable lodgings, with pleasant walks in the neighbourhood, for the interior of the island is delightful; plenty of vegetation and some fine trees. The roads constructed for Bonaparte are still available, and a few hundred yards from my lodgings stood Longwood, the house in which he died. It had a peculiar attraction, and I visited it many times, picturing to myself the various scenes that had occurred there, especially the last one. The trees, from which the neighbourhood derived its name, have all been cut down. Old residents say that it seriously affected the rainfall. The front verandah is jalousied, and in certain places slits are cut, through which Bonaparte watched the soldiers at drill, thus being unobserved. Just opposite is a better house that was built for him during his lifetime, but which he refused to occupy. It was then the residence of a French officer sent out by his Government to watch over Bonaparte's tomb. He hated his job, and told me in a burst of confidence that he wished the Emperor had never been born! The memory of Bonaparte seemed to have died out. Once on my way up to Longwood on foot a tribe of small boys accompanied me for some distance. I asked, "Who was Bonaparte?" There was no reply for some time, and then one of them exclaimed tentatively, "Guess he was a Man." This was his way of asserting that it was not a woman we were talking of. Yet not fifty years had elapsed since his body had been removed to France, and scarcely more since he died. My musings

took the form, "Here is a man whose deeds roused the world, and yet in the place that his death rendered celebrated he is already forgotten! Such is Fame! How this man would sympathize with that splendid soldier Marshal Foch, when he was refused permission to advance and occupy Berlin, and how triumphantly he would emphasize the inevitable consequences that have resulted from not doing so, the results of political control of the Soldier."

There was a Governor with the usual officials, and one felt back in civilization again, especially as there is always more ceremony in these potty little places than elsewhere. At times shooting was to be had, but the arrival of a warship was always coincident with a close season. We bade adieu to Longwood, rode down to Jamestown, and before embarking paused to inspect a tablet on the arch-way leading on to the jetty that indicated the rise of a tidal wave, which some years previously had caused great havoc in the lower town; it was the heaviest roller ever experienced.

And so off to Ascension, another 800 miles; a fair wind all the way and all the peace of a sailing trip. This island was officially a warship, and all on it were subject to naval discipline, the articles of war and the Queen's Regulations. I believe it still is. The Captain of the 'Ship' was also the Governor.

The island is a vast cinder heap with numerous extinct volcanoes. It is to be hoped that it is so, and that we don't have a Mont Pelée again. One peak (3,000 feet high) is called Green Mountain, and it was beginning to justify its name. A winding road known as the 'Ramp' led up it, and from the summit one got a panoramic view of the island and its volcanoes, the latter very clearly defined. One named the 'Riding School' was a remarkably good specimen. Trees and vegetation have been induced to grow, such as the Bermuda Cedar, Pride of India, Hibiscus, Eucalyptus, Banana and others, and the farm, under the fostering care of the bailiff, produces fruit and vegetables. Some headway has been made with pasturage, and we found sheep there. Of course the great need is water. Some is obtained from sea fogs. The moisture being collected, drips and runs into tanks; also there is a dew pond. In short, I am convinced that the ingenuity and perseverance of man is going to transform the Green Mountain into a fertile proposition—in time.

Birds, too, have been introduced, such as the Mynah, Guinea Fowl and Red-legged Partridge. On the plains were a few wild donkeys, the descendants of domesticated animals that had escaped captivity.

A very interesting spectacle is afforded in a valley named 'Wide-awake Fair,' whither countless thousands of terns, or sea-swallows, repair for the nesting season. The eggs are quite good, and by clearing a space of ground they can always be obtained fresh.

The green turtle also helps to vary the diet. They visit the island to lay eggs, and a considerable number are captured and put into a pond. Landing is difficult, and very often one has to be hoisted 'On Board' by a crane. On leaving we were supplied with some turtle, but the men would not eat them, so I handed one over to the Governor of Sierra Leone, much to his satisfaction and to my benefit.

At Accra we found urgent orders to push on to the Niger to join the senior officer, who we found in the *Royalist*, with the *Racer*. The natives had burned and plundered a factory at Pagani, about 100 miles up the river, and the traders had appealed for help. This was sent them in the form of a punitive expedition embarked in two of the company's steamers. In obedience to orders I despatched a small reinforcement under the Sub, and in a few days the force returned, having accomplished its object and given the natives a salutary lesson by burning several villages and shooting many of the implicated men. Thus the murder of two traders was avenged, as was necessary, for these people only understand this form of argument. It was a rather onesided affair, but they asked for it, and got it. Reprisals are the only methods by which such crimes can be brought home.

As our engine was disabled by a fractured connecting rod, the senior officer ordered the *Racer* to tow us to Elmina, whence we were to write home for a new one. Now there was a telegraph station at Accra, and accordingly I went to call on the S.O., but he was down with fever and could not (or would not) see me. The next best thing was to confide in the Captain of the *Racer*. He fully sympathized with me, and as we were passing through the roadstead of Accra, by some extraordinary fatality the towing hawser carried away, and we had to anchor. Fullerton decided to leave us there, and I immediately wired our trouble to the Admiralty. In six

weeks' time we had the new rod, that otherwise would not have arrived for three months. During this time I stayed at the Castle.

When ready we took the Governor along the coast to hold palavers ; this enabled us to get some shooting. On one of these expeditions we came across a German officer, who did not account at all satisfactorily for his presence, merely stating that he was out for sport, *faute de mieux*. We had to accept his pretext, but we knew a spy was in our midst. A perfect specimen of a Junker, he was assertive and arrogant, especially as to his physical qualities, but we had a dark horse in one of our Subs, who defeated him in various trials of strength, much to our delight, after which the German somewhat took a back seat.

On return to Accra I received a telegram from the Admiralty ordering us to Bermuda. It was obviously a mistake, so I wired and asked for confirmation. It came in the form of ' Proceed to Plymouth, England.' A hearty sigh of relief went up, and the early days of July, 1887, saw us in sight of St. Vincent steaming against a stiff breeze and a head sea. The little craft was pitching very heavily, and I got uneasy with regard to the unusual noise made by the screw. On arrival the diver was sent down, but reported everything normal. As will be seen later, there must have been some injury.

St. Vincent is a large Ascension. There is a telegraph station of some importance with a large staff, and they have a great reputation as cricketers, the pitch being on mats laid on the cinder. One of the mountains to the Westward of the anchorage has a remarkable profile, which is stated by enthusiastic Americans to resemble George Washington ; perhaps it does, but I never saw the gentleman. When I visited the Consul, he handed me a telegram announcing my promotion to Commander. As I was 150 from the top of the list it was rather a congratulatory matter. The Sub was promoted too, and we held a celebration that evening.

But we were not to depart with only pleasurable sensations, for an untoward incident occurred. As the ship was coaled by natives the men had been granted leave until four o'clock, an hour before sailing. At that hour all but two had returned, and I sent a message to the Consul to hurry them up. This he did by sending

them off with an escort of five Portuguese policemen. On the arrival of the boat within hailing distance, the two 'prisoners' rose on the escort and threw them all into the water, and made the boatmen pull alongside. One of our boats was able to salve all the jettisoned cargo and bring it on board in a very disgruntled condition. There was only one thing to be done, so after making prisoners of the offenders I went to the Consul and together we sought the Governor, who we found in a towering rage. I think that the ignominy of five Portuguese being thrown overboard by two English was greater than he could bear.

At first he would not hear of any compromise. He had telegraphed to Lisbon, and it would probably become an international affair, and a lot of hot air of that sort. We listened to it with our tongues in our cheeks. When he had blown off steam and begun to simmer down, I explained to him that the men were noted athletes, sort of world champions, who could easily handle half a dozen men of any nationality at a time. Finally he relented on condition that I sent down a diver to recover the policemen's swords, lost in their involuntary baths. These terms sounded easy enough. Fortune proved our friend, and we found them almost at once and sent the policemen clothed and in their right minds on shore, each one with a little douceur in his pocket, enough to make them wish for the recurrence of such an episode. I parted on the best terms with His Excellency, who promised to send a telegram squashing the previous one, which in my belief he had never sent at all. Thus ended a contretemps that might have had unpleasant consequences, especially for the men, whom I did not want to punish for a foolish freak, for they were both excellent fellows with unstained records. I kept them in suspense for some time and then dismissed them with a severe reprimand. As Pope says, "To err is human, to forgive is divine," and I remembered the Admiral's remark with reference to my own escapade at Malta.

The following morning we weighed under sail and stood across the N.E. trade, until we reached the horse latitudes. Here the wind came from the N.W., and we shaped course for the English Channel in the best of spirits and with great expectation of a favourable passage, only to be doomed to disappointment, for the breeze barely lasted for a few hours, and a stark calm

set in. Steam was promptly raised, and we started, but it was soon apparent to the veriest tyro that something was very wrong with the works. The engineer arrived, pale with emotion, and said that if we did not stop we should be tearing out the bottom or something equally undesirable. I looked at the machinery, and although not a specialist or a born mechanic, could see that it was protesting in a very marked manner. We stopped and raised the screw ; it was a stark calm, as I have said, so a boat was lowered, and I got into it (having first arrayed myself in bathing costume), and we hauled under the counter, whence a short dive took me down to the screw well where I could see and feel the bearings. My worst fears were confirmed, for the cheese-coupling of the foremost bearing was fractured and several inches out of the true. It was now quite clear why the screw would not revolve properly and what had brought such an enormous strain on the engines. I had a strong suspicion that the accident had occurred while we were steaming into St. Vincent, that it had held for a time and dropped when we raised the screw, and that our diver could not have detected it. Having left under sail we could only discover it when we started to steam. There was nothing to be done but grin and bear it and become a sailing ship pure and simple, so we got the screw inboard and filled up the well with a wooden partition, square rigged the mainmast with spare yards and sails, and made a barque of her. Then we sat down and whistled for a breeze. It tried our patience, for the calm lasted for a fortnight, during which we only moved a few miles, although we trimmed sails to every light air that came along. I began to think of the Ancient Mariner, the Flying Dutchman, and all the other worthies who had had a curse laid on them, and wondered what we had done to deserve it, or who the Jonah could be. It was intensely irritating to be surrounded by empty tins and other oddments that we had thrown overboard days previously. They seemed to mock us and tell us that it was no use trying to get away. We caught Albacore, and we caught Sharks, and just as we were catching a bad attack of blues the brave N.W. wind came along again, and this time held until we got out of this trying region of calm.

I have sometimes wondered whether we could have emulated the Scotch Engineers and their tolerant Skippers, whom our maritime romancers write about, by trimming

down the gunboat until the screw was out of the water and Sandy McTavish or Jock Macandrew got to work on it, with the result that the craft 'limped into Port.' But from its state, when we got into dry dock at Plymouth, I don't think that any of those super-engineers would have managed to make the thing go ; their verdict must have been 'Nothin' doin'.' What would the author have done then?

The wind drew aft, and with studding sails set we were soon going over ten knots. As long as I was on deck we used to 'Carry On,' and it was just as comfortable there with a chair, a pipe and a book, as in the cabin, but at night there was a tendency to take off the rags. It was better to err on the side of caution, so I lay low and waited for the morning, and then piled them on again. During this time we were 'Six upon Four' ; that is to say that in order to avoid running out of provisions only four rations were issued to six men, the savings in money value being credited to them.

We arrived in soundings, and then the wind fell light and hauled to the Eastward. For nearly a week we beat against it. I wanted to take the ship into Plymouth, but our luck was out, and it was evident that all hands were sighing for Home and Beauty. So one morning I announced that if the wind did not come fair by 8 p.m. we would up helm for Queenstown. About that hour I stood on the bridge, watch in hand, and as the bell struck eight gave the order to up helm ; the hands had not waited to be called ; they were all there, and the yards rounded in like magic. Next morning we were standing into Cork Harbour replying to inquisitive demands from the signal station at Roches Point. Our delay had made even the Admiralty wonder what had happened. The papers were, of course, full of horrible surmises, which were not calculated to make our friends and relations very happy. It had not been a bad passage, although it lasted for forty-two days, for fourteen of them were calm and seven more light head winds. During the voyage I wiled away the time by playing picquet with the Assistant-Paymaster, the stakes being that the loser was to stand a dinner on arrival, the winner to order it. I had won by a narrow margin, so after reporting myself to the Admiral and despatching a whole sheaf of telegrams, I went to the hotel and ordered the best meal that they

could provide, and the best of bubbly. I have always been a bit of an Epicure, and did full justice to my talent in that way. The result so satisfied my friend that he did not flinch from a rather exorbitant bill. We followed it up by a trip to Cork the next day, where we engaged an outside car to take us to Blarney. The weather was superb, and we were lucky enough to hit on a typical Jarvey who kept us amused with his anecdotes and droll wit. On paying him off I gave him a good tip and said, "There is something for a mass or two; I suppose you are a good Catholic?"

"'Deed, I am," he replied. "And your Honour is a Protestant, I do be thinking?"

"Yes," I returned. "And I suppose you think we'll all be going to Hell some fine day?"

"Sure, and I hope so," with a knowing grin, "or else the Priests do be tellin' us a parcel of lies."

On return to Queenstown a bundle of telegrams awaited me, one of which gave me more satisfaction than the rest, for it came from my fiancée. Three days afterwards a ship that had been engaged in the manœuvres came into harbour, and by order of the Admiralty towed us to Plymouth, where we went into the Hamoaze and paid off in August, 1887. When I reported myself at Admiralty House, the Secretary to Admiral Lord John Hay handed me my commission as Commander, and the following day I sported the gold hat with great pride.

My future wife arrived in a day or two to stay with some friends, and has since told me that she could hardly recognize me. I was as black as a coal, thin and shivery. The fact was I was seriously debilitated by many attacks of malarial fever, that have left me a legacy of sciatica.

This tour of foreign service was the most disagreeable of my whole career. In Africa death follows disease with appalling rapidity. I have known a man eat a hearty breakfast, in good health and spirits, and then be stricken down during the day and buried the same evening! Some ships were lucky and got to the Cape, but we never did. Periodically the *Wye*, a storeship, came out, and then there was an assemblage of ships, and we met, dined, growled, and parted until the next time. The life drove a good many to drink, for there was not even the excitement of hunting slavers that our predecessors had. No

ship should have been kept on this detestable station longer than a year, and they should have been specially built and fitted for river work.

A couple of months after my arrival home, during which time I put on weight and regained my health, Miss Elliot and I were married at St. George's, Wilton, Somersetshire, on October 24, 1887.

CHAPTER XIV

THE *NORTHAMPTON*

All great events may be compared to milestones on life's road.
They pass, preserved by memory ; rich gift by God bestow'd.
A word, a glance, will strike a chord on the subconscious mind,
It swells, enacts the scene again, then fades once more enshrined.

As announced, I became a Benedict soon after my arrival home. My wife is a member of an old Border family from the neighbourhood of the Tweed, and her branch emigrated to Wilton, near Taunton, in Somersetshire. Her father, a man of independent means, married a Miss Norman, whose family lived close by. He occupied himself with literary pursuits, and, in addition, was an amateur artist of no mean pretension, being one of the few ever elected an honorary member of the Royal Academy. On his death Mrs. Elliot disposed of the property, and moved to Southsea, where I met my future wife. Possessed of much personal charm, and some good looks, she was a universal favourite with all who knew her, and had also some celebrity for her extraordinary wealth of hair, which was of a bronze tint, and when let down touched the ground. When we were in Paris I overheard some French people discussing it ; they said that she could not be British with such a magnificent *chevelure*. She had two sisters and one brother ; the eldest sister was dead and the younger married to C. Stuart Erskine. Our wedding was a quiet one, and her brother gave her away ; my eldest brother acted as best man, and my parson brother as chief performer of the ceremony. We went to Bath for the honeymoon. Of course I was very proud of being a Commander, but I gave up announcing myself as such after being shown into a room full of people by a maid as 'The Commandment and Mrs. Fleet !' After that I fell back upon the courtesy title of Captain.

Marriage is the great adventure of our lives, and I always say that an engaged pair should live in the same house for some time, and then they will be able to study each other's little ways, such as behaviour at breakfast. Marriage is the milestone from which we date all events, the milliarium from which all the others radiate. How often we hear 'That was the year we married,' or 'That was before we married.' It is with heartfelt thankfulness that I am able to say that my married life has been one of continued happiness, most of which I owe to the partner of my joys and sorrows, the former many, the latter few, indeed negligible but for our irreparable grief when our gallant lad fell fighting for King and Country. He was our only child, the best of sons, and would have gone far in his profession, for he had the true spirit of the regiment, and had already won the Military Cross and been twice mentioned in dispatches. Having passed through Woolwich, he served for some time at home, and then joined a battery, 90th R.F.A. in India, where he was when war broke out. Thence he was transferred as a subaltern to M battery, R.H.A., being next transferred as Captain of S battery, R.H.A. in Mesopotamia. His next step was to command B battery, 56th Brigade, R.F.A.; he took it to France, and on the 10th of September, 1918, the same shell killed him and two of his men near Moeuvre. Thus fell our gallant son, in whom we lost a dear companion. Some may wonder that he did not join the Navy. He did go up for it, but had sustained a severe accident just before and the medical examiners rejected him, but he had quite recovered when he went up for Woolwich. Only those who have experienced a similar loss (alas! they are so many) can realize the terrible grief caused by such a bereavement in one's old age.

My first service was a half-pay course of gunnery and torpedo. We attended in mufti, and, of course, felt justified in taking an overslaugh if inclined. As Captains and Commanders we got a little more deference, but still there was the feeling that we were what the men call neither 'Dog's body nor Peasoup.' I overheard a Sub allude to us once as a lot of old Half-Pays. I called him up, and while requesting him to modulate his tones, pointed out to him that at all events we had reached a rank to which it was *possible* he might not attain. Had we been in uniform the remark could not have been made.

We lived in rooms in Southsea, and we both found many of our old friends still to the fore. The course finished, we packed up and went abroad. We travelled via Harwich to Antwerp, and stopped for a week at the St. Antoine. The steamer by which we crossed seemed crowded by bagmen who, in the smoking-room, were very curious to know for what firm I was travelling ; their curiosity remains unsatisfied to this day. At Antwerp, while attending service in the Cathedral, I was astonished by the behaviour of the tourists who swarmed, guide-book in hand, chattering at the top of their voices. It made me speculate how these people would have relished an invasion, accompanied by like behaviour, in their own places of worship.

We left for Brussels, and stayed in the Avenue Louise ; an exhibition was being held, and it was a very pleasant place to spend a few hours in, although it did not differ from any of the same sort of show. We found the restaurants absurdly cheap, and the cuisine excellent, and made our first experiment with frogs' legs and snails, and had it not been for prejudice, would have acknowledged them to be delicacies. It has been said that before going to Paris, Brussels should be visited, and I quite endorse that.

Naturally, we paid a visit to Waterloo. I had a fairly good knowledge of the battle and its details, so went fully primed and ready to act as Cicerone to my wife, but we were joined by a retired General and his daughter, who accompanied us over the field ; my natural modesty prevailed, and I left the descriptive part to him with a confidence that was not misplaced. Waterloo created some peculiar impressions. To stand on the ridge and look Southwards enabled one to visualize the whole battle, and thereby realize the splendid judgment of the man who selected it for a last stand as the spot where the crown was to be placed on his professional reputation or his fame tarnished for ever. On a ridge Wellington sat upon his charger, Copenhagen. Across the intervening valley, on another ridge, sat Bonaparte on his charger, Marengo. It seemed to me that with a good megaphone they could have conversed.

I attempted, as I suppose most people have, to walk up the mound without stopping, but failed ignominiously, and had to sit down for a breather, much to the amusement of the ladies, who had been watching me with

interest. We left, animated by the glorious deeds of our soldiers, who don't always get due credit for their services. Witness the Spanish historian, who states that the Spaniards cleared the French out of their country during the Peninsular War, assisted by a few mercenary British under one Wellington. Thank Heaven it is not the fashion for us to blow our own trumpets, but there are occasions when we might do so without loss of caste.

We then visited Bonn and put up in a Pension kept by an English woman with German habits and cuisine. We soon discovered there was an air of arrogant officialdom everywhere, and the average German delighted in being as obnoxious as possible, especially to foreigners ; I know now that it was Kultur. We made the acquaintance of an officer of one of the regiments, and he invited us to visit his barracks ; the day was fixed, but on the morning of it he told us that his Colonel would not allow foreigners to inspect them, especially as one was an English Officer. We were not very disappointed, and I think the young man had the grace to feel rather ashamed of his senior officer's lack of courtesy.

We trained to Cologne and inspected the famous Cathedral, and came back by boat. The German railways did not strike me as being very first rate either as regards construction or accommodation ; we bumped and jolted the whole way, besides being dragooned by officials. When we passed through a station without stopping, there stood the stationmaster in a military costume, rigid and important, gravely saluting the train as it rattled past ; perhaps a 'Highly-Born' might be on board.

We took the train to Mainz and, coming back, got out at Assmannshausen, where we had lunch and drank some of the excellent wine of that name, a red hock, of which there was a good brand at Bonn. It is not the wine that one complains of in Germany, but the food, and the course way of cooking it. Embarking again, we passed the huge statue of Germania, through the bridge of boats at Coblenz, and returned by the Lorelei and Ehrenbreitstein. As long as the Germans keep to the right bank they are welcome to it.

Bonn possesses a unique ferry composed of a number of stout boats made fast astern of each other ; the current always runs down, and the headmost boat is strongly

moored in the centre of the river, the remainder tailing astern of it. By putting the helm of the sternmost boat 'Hard Over,' the line of boats is swung in to the bank, the passengers embark, the helm is shifted, and the current swings the lot over to the other side.

We quitted Germany without regret, and never had the slightest wish to revisit that land of gross, fat, overfed people. And yet it has produced men foremost in the ranks of science, Explorers, Inventors, and Authors, although many of the last have prostituted their brains by the theories and exhortations they have let loose on the world. Neither must we forget the undoubted musical prominence of these people, and it seems incredible that a nation that produced Wagner, Beethoven, Weber, Liszt and others should have sunk to such degrading acts as it did in the Great War. But some men of science seem to have a different mentality from the common horde, otherwise we should not have had the extraordinary manifesto on the part of some of ours who lately indicated a desire to 'Shake hands and forget the whole beastly Business.' It was gratifying to know that the great majority of our professors did not associate themselves with such unnecessary altruism.

In Paris we put up at the Hôtel Hausmann in the avenue of that name; I believe it has since been changed. It had been recommended by a young Frenchman whom we met at Brussels, and it fully justified his recommendation. We found only two other English people in residence, but the French visitors were most sympathetic. Our quarters were a complete suite, very comfortable and clean. The hotel surrounded a courtyard containing a fountain and plants, and was an enjoyable place to sit out in. The food was a delightful change after our German experience.

I bought a Baedeker, and with its help we did Paris very thoroughly. Everybody knows the city, and I am not going to inflict our experiences on my readers. Of course, as a Britisher, it comes next to our dingy old London in my humble opinion, so I shall content myself by remarking that each possesses good points that might be copied with advantage by the other, and leave my readers to decide what they are. Anyway, they will agree with me that it is a fascinating place to visit, and that the temperament of its inhabitants is gayer and brighter than ours; it seems to infect you, and one

suffers a corresponding drop on reaching the familiar and homelike dinginess of London.

We stayed in London for a time and then moved down to Blackheath in order to be near the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, where I joined for a course on October 1, 1888, that lasted until the end of June, 1889. I took the opportunity of rubbing up my navigation, and attended some lectures on steam and naval history. The latter subject has always possessed considerable interest for me. A new field had been opened by the works of Captain Alfred T. Mahan, of the United States Navy, to whom the officers of the British Navy are indebted for shedding a flood of light on the deeds of their predecessors and the importance of Sea Power The works of this gifted man are in my possession, and have been very useful to me as a means of giving lectures (in a small way) to men under my command.

Life at the college was very pleasant. Dances and tennis parties helped to wile away the time, and a theatrical party, of which my wife and I were members, achieved the usual success bestowed by complacent friends upon such efforts.

Then came the manœuvres of 1889 and my appointment to the *Northampton* at Sheerness. This vessel was classed as a Cruiser; her chief armament was twelve 18-ton guns of 10-inch calibre of the old muzzle-loading variety; they looked like huge iron soda-water bottles. She was heavily sparred and, of course, was no good under canvas. Her speed trial was 13 knots, a fiction. The complement was 560. Such was a Cruiser of the transition stage. We received our crew in the early morning, and left that afternoon, having first, in the spirit of the age, and in order to prepare for battle, crossed royal yards. It occurred to me at the time that in the event of actual warfare our wire rigging and other impedimenta would have very soon disabled our twin screws.

Our destination was Spithead, where a fleet was assembling for the double purpose of manœuvres and the reception of Kaiser Wilhelm. We arrived, and, having picked up our billet, found plenty of interest in watching the arrival of the others from all parts of the United Kingdom. The only homogeneous unit was the Channel Fleet, which consisted of the new Admiral class; the *Camperdown* bore the Admiral's flag. The remainder

was a most heterogeneous lot. The Cruisers, as a body, were more modern, although there were a few relics among them, but in their case the yards had been very wisely discarded and most of them at least *looked* capable of speed. Four Admirals showed their flags in a fleet comprising 130 pendants. Destroyers had not arrived yet, but there were some Torpedo Catchers in the shape of gunboats that proved to be failures. The armament varied from the old muzzle-loader to the last word in breech-loaders ; searchlights had arrived, and the torpedo was improving daily. Altogether it made a brave show, and was undoubtedly at that time the strongest example possible of a Fleet in Being. It was the high-water mark of the transition stage.

On the 9th of August, 1889, the German Emperor arrived with nine ships of various types, but all had discarded their yards and unnecessary top-hamper. It was a glorious summer's day, and as the Germans steamed slowly down our lines with their bands playing and ships manned they made a good show. All eyes were concentrated on the bridge of the leading ship, the *Friedrich der Grosse*. On it stood two men (isolated from the common herd), the Kaiser and Bismarck ; the huge bulk of the latter dwarfed his Imperial Master and almost reduced him to insignificance.

The pilot had not been dropped yet (as depicted by Tenniel) ; *that* took place later, and, whatever the Kaiser's real reason was, one can almost sympathize with him for wishing to rid himself of such a dominating personality, although he disclosed a mind capable of jealousy and ingratitude.

Quite unconsciously, on the 9th of August, 1889, the Kaiser laid the foundation of his downfall. The sight of our powerful fleet (as it truly was for those days) inflamed his ambition, and he determined to build one that, even if it did not equal ours, should go far toward competing with it favourably. He forthwith embarked upon a career of aggrandizement that was to terminate on the 11th of November, 1918, fatally for himself. To him, and the German nation, belongs the discredit of the bloodiest war of history, that cost millions of lives, convulsed the world, ruined the greater part of Europe, and covered their flag with everlasting infamy. Such crimes can never be forgotten.

A few days after this the British Fleet weighed and

proceeded to sea, passing the Royal Yacht at St. Helens. Several Royalties, including the Imperial guest were on board the latter. It was blowing a hard summer gale, and by the time we had all weighed, the tide had turned and was running strongly to the Eastward in the teeth of it. One or two mishaps occurred, one especially, to the *Black Prince*. Before getting her anchor she drifted alongside the next astern, the *Invincible*, with unfortunate results, such as smashing boats and bringing down all the light top-hamper. By the time we were all out the weather cleared, the fleets got sorted out and departed for their respective rendezvous.

The Kaiser I saw again under closer and more favourable circumstances, once at Port Victoria, where he embarked for Germany and I made one of a group of officers assembled to do him honour, and again in 1900, when he took part in the funeral cortège of our great Queen. On the first occasion we saw a pleasant, ruddy-faced young man, who seemed thoroughly impressed with his importance, yet carrying a certain degree of affability. On the last there seemed more hauteur and aloofness, due perhaps to age and the solemnity of the occasion. The sense of the man's high position undoubtedly impressed the casual spectator and inspired awe.

The *Northampton* fell to a Blue Fleet, under that energetic Admiral Sir George Tryon. Our destination was Milford Haven, whence he took us about in his usual masterful manner. The manœuvres were more or less a fog to most of us ; we were not taken into the confidence of the Admiral, but simply lived in a nightmare of motion, being whirled about from one position to another apparently without cause, and certainly without effect, as the results proved. We never saw our enemy, and so learned nothing about tactics in battle, and the strategical moves made by the respective Fleet Commanders were also lost by reason of our being totally unacquainted with them, and I doubt whether many of the Captains were taken into the confidence of their respective Chiefs. We daily lived in hopes of a fight, but it never materialized, and the order to disperse and return to our respective ports was received with unmixed satisfaction that the thing was over. The outstanding incident in my memory is, that a sudden dash from Milford to Kingstown was followed by an equally sudden dash to the English Channel, the

last dash being conducted in a thick fog, during which the fleet passed close to the Wolf Rock, as the navigator informed me the following morning. The navigator of the flagship that led us in line ahead must have had complete confidence in himself, evidently shared by those that followed. But the main point is that the enemy played the rôle of the Elusive Pimpernel on each occasion. There seemed to be a rooted objection (during the manœuvres in which I participated) on the part of the Chief on either side to take any chance of jeopardizing his reputation by contact with the opposing fleet. It seemed to me strenuously avoided, and they appeared oblivious of the fact that we were out for instructional purposes and not for a game of 'follow my leader' or 'hide and seek.' It did not seem to be realized that no great discredit was attachable to a weak fleet being defeated by a more powerful one provided that the defeat was not the result of incompetence. As it was, one could not avoid a comparison to Thomas Winterbottom Hance and Monsieur Pierre of Gilbert's *Bab Ballads*.

Thus we never profited by these alarums and excursions, but the cruisers got a great deal of exercise (this was before the introduction of wireless), for they were always on the move, no sooner in than off again, while the battleships were trailed about like pet dogs on a lead, very much to the bewilderment of us all.

It was the same in 1890, when, by taking advantage of a weakly constructed scheme, the fleet to which the *Northampton* belonged steamed away into the broad Atlantic and hid until it was time to return for the close of the manœuvres. The others might just as well have hunted for the Snark. We went somewhere off the Azores, where we waited for a day or so, filling up the time by coaling at sea, and then started back at the psychological moment. The above experiment, coupled with 'Down lower yards and Topmasts,' was all we got out of those tactics. We all felt that it was a wicked waste of time, money and temper.

We returned to Sheerness, where the *Northampton* was guardship, and paid-off; before doing so I received an offer from the Admiralty to remain on as Commander in Command, with the information that she was to commission with a nucleus crew. Of course I accepted, for my turn for a sea-going ship had not arrived, and anything was better than half-pay.

I remained in command (except during the manœuvres, when we shipped a Captain and a full crew) until June, 1891. My wife and our boy joined me, and we took a house on the front. The boy had been born at Blackheath on the 26th of November, 1888; he was christened in the chapel of the Naval College and given the name of Aylmer Louis Elliot Fleet.

Sheerness (known as Sheernasty) was a very happy period for us. It has been much decried as a station, but, in my opinion, undeservedly. A place is very much what you make it, and the Services made it very pleasant. We had plenty of dances, cricket, lawn-tennis and hockey in their proper seasons, and, by the way of sport, a clay pigeon club and some rough shooting in the neighbourhood. During the severe winter of 1891 there was a rare lot of wild duck and geese in the marshes, and we had six weeks' skating. The coursing in the Island of Sheppey was very good and gave one plenty of exercise.

The Royal Artillery had a very comfortable mess, and with their proverbial hospitality made us most welcome. Whist was the card game in those days, and many a rubber I played with the R.A. and in the Naval Barracks. All this, with six weeks' annual leave, which we spent in London, made the time fly. June, 1891, found the ship in dock at Chatham being overhauled for the manœuvres, and one morning I received a telegram from the Admiralty offering me command of the *Tartar*, to which I replied accepting. The Admiral Superintendent, hearing of it, sent for me and told me I might go home on leave while the *Northampton* was in dock.

In 1889 I became a member of the United Service Club, popularly known as the Senior. At that time no officer under the rank of Commander or Field-Officer was eligible, and no guests were admitted; the latter regulation was sometimes convenient if you wanted to get rid of a bore. There was a great air of solemnity, and, to some extent, of rank too. The Lords of the Admiralty always lunched at a certain table, and having once inadvertently taken a seat at it, I was warned by a horrified waiter of this. To him I replied that it was quite good enough for me too, but I think that I hurried over my meal so as not to get caught. But it was, and still is, the best club of its kind in

London ; indeed, I believe it to be the best of any. Over one hundred years ago it was founded by the Iron Duke, and it possesses great attractions and traditions. It contains some handsome pictures by famous artists, busts, and other relics of distinguished officers who were members. The drawing-room is remarkably fine, as is the smoking-room, immediately below, and the addition of the neighbouring premises with forty bedrooms has made it still more popular. The restriction as to entry has been removed, and junior officers of the combatant branch are now admitted. I often wonder what some of the old members would say to the innovations, especially to the introduction of waitresses. The latest is the admission of ladies to lunch, tea or dinner in rooms reserved for that purpose. We are now quite up to date.

In 1887 I joined the 'Royal Naval Club of 1765.' This club is essentially a dining club, and has no premises. The dinners are held on anniversaries of important naval victories ; no officer below the rank of Commander is eligible. The president, who is selected by the Committee, invites a guest as the guest of the club for that evening. In 1889 the club united with the 'Navy Club' (Thatched House), held on similar lines, taking the title of 'The Royal Navy Club of 1765 and 1785.' The records of both clubs have been preserved, and contain some interesting items, with a long list of distinguished officers who were members, among them Lord Nelson. When I joined we dined at Willis' Rooms, moving later to the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Metropole. The club funds are in a most flourishing state. The annual credit balance, amounting to several hundreds of pounds accruing from income on investments, is annually donated to Naval Charity. It is a good institution to belong to in every way.

CHAPTER XV

THE *TARTAR*

Isles of the West, Legend and Quest, Pirate and bold Buccaneer.
Rich fruits and food; sometimes too good; landcrab and iced bitter beer!
Breakers that crash, palm trees that smash, smote by the sturdy sea breeze.
Tropical night, just sheer delight, days when we wish it would freeze!

WE commissioned the *Tartar* on June 30, 1891, and I commenced a new phase of naval life. Farewell to yards and sails, farewell to the muzzle-loading gun. A sailing ship undoubtedly possessed charm, but the warships of modern days had ousted them, even as motors have the elegant victoria or classic barouche. What would have been thought of the earlier motorists if they had towed a lorry containing a pair of horses in case of a break-down! Going from the *Northampton* to the *Tartar* was like going from a hay waggon to a handy little two-seater.

The ship possessed a very serviceable battery of 6-inch B.L. guns, with a good secondary battery. Of 1,770 tons, and classed as a third-class cruiser, her three pole masts, figurehead, scroll work on the bow, and fine lines combined to give her a very graceful appearance. Two of the 6-inch were mounted on the forecastle and two on the poop, which made her roll abnormally at times. It was a heavy armament for so small a ship, but we should have been glad of it in war-time. There were three torpedo tubes. Her nominal speed was 17 knots, and she carried a crew of 176.

The usual well-ordered hustle and bustle of commissioning ensued, and I soon found that officers and men were of a high type. We completed and got away, joining a fleet assembling in the Downs for the 1891 manœuvres. Vice-Admiral Sir Michael Culme Seymour was in supreme command, and the manœuvres consisted

chiefly in steam tactics, at which game we were detached to play by ourselves with three other small ships, while the others gambolled in the distance ; we were a sort of quadrille party. We worked up the East Coast during these performances, usually anchoring for the night, and thus spent a pleasant week-end at Scarborough. The Admiral's *point d'appui* was St. Helens (he was a golfer), but as we were steaming into the anchorage our ship had an engine-room mishap, and the Admiral sent us to Leith for repairs that detained us a whole week, so we got no golf, but enjoyed the historic city of Edinburgh. This visit also gave me an opportunity of hunting up an Aunt of mine (on the Faithful side), the widow of a Doctor Begg, at one time a celebrated Moderator of the Presbyterian Church. A somewhat awesome experience in real life, he had been defunct for some time, and I think the family had recovered from the shock. One of my cousins, F. Begg, represented West Glasgow in the House of Commons for some years.

This well-known city need not be described. It is one of the gems of the Empire. Not many capitals have so much beauty, tradition and legend combined. I am reminded of a Scot's first visit to our English capital. It was told me by the Adjutant of a Highland regiment. On its arrival at Aldershot, the Pipe-Major paid his first visit to London ; it was a November day, and there was a typical fog on. On the following day the Adjutant asked him what he thought of London. He replied, "Eh, Sir, it's a fine broad toun, but awfie dark."

At the Theatre Royal I found my old favourite, *Black-eyed Susan,* being played, and went to see it. Alas, it had been revised and sadly altered ; all the old favourite airs had been supplanted ; the words were the same, but somehow they sounded different. During my return to Leith on the top of a tram, we were rammed by an empty brake and pair, driven by a drunken driver returning from a beanfeast ; he evidently thought the tram ought to get out of his way, but it didn't, much to the detriment of the brake. When we got under way again the conductor came on top and began taking names and addresses, so as to have witnesses in the event of proceedings being taken. Notebook in hand, he attacked me. "Name?" he abruptly demanded. Not overpleased with his manner, or with the idea of being summoned as a witness, I

replied, "My name is Norval, on the Grampian Hills my father feeds his flocks." He jotted down something, and then said, "Look here, we don't want to know what your father does; only your name and address." Very astonished, I waited. "Surname?" he asked. "Norval," I replied. "Christian name?" I thought Algernon would do, and said so. "Address?" was his final question, to which I replied, "Grampian Hills." He went away without even asking for the number. When he had gone down, a man (evidently a Cockney) turned toward me with a grin, and said, "I've 'eard that name afore, Guv'nor." That's all right, I thought, but evidently the Conductor has not. I wonder what happened when he handed in his list.

Moubray, our Navigating Lieutenant, invited some of us to the family seat of Otterston, at Aberdour, in Fife. On the way we crossed over the Firth by the stupendous bridge, and the most prophetic among us little dreamed that we were looking down on the future site of the Royal Dockyard of Rosyth, destined to play such an important part in the Great War.

Otterston is a fine old place with an historic association. The old tower, round which it has assembled, dates from the Norman conquest. I naturally assumed that such a place must be haunted, and at breakfast made the inquiry of one of the family. "Oh yes," was the reply, "we have a haunted room, and you slept in it!"

Repairs having been made good we rejoined the Admiral, and were detached on scouting duties in the Channel, off the Royal Sovereign Lightship. We were one of a chain of cruisers, and continuously patrolled a section, preserving contact with cruisers on each side. One night it was reported that a suspicious craft had broken through. We pursued at full speed, making the private signal, to which we got no reply. She disappeared in the mist, so we returned to our station; we never discovered what this Flying Dutchman was, but I have a shrewd suspicion, for we heard that our neighbour had got off his beat and had been chased by a hostile cruiser and escaped.

This recalls to me that in the previous manœuvres we (in the *Northampton*) found, by means of our searchlight, a cruiser under our guns one night. It was not apparent whether she was a friend or foe, for we could not get any response to the private signal. At last I

induced the Captain to open fire, by pointing out that if a friend it would do her no harm, and if an enemy we could claim her as a prize, and earn kudos. We did so, and at the conclusion of the manœuvres she was awarded to us.

The manœuvres over, the ships dispersed, and the Channel Fleet proceeded to Spithead to receive the French Fleet under Admiral Gervais ; we were included to our content. This visit was a most enjoyable function, the main feature being a ball, given by the Mayor of Portsmouth in the splendid Town Hall. Some hundreds of guests attended, among them our future King George V, who at that time was serving in the *Excellent*.

The French Admiral gave a big *déjeuner* on board his flagship ; it was a choice affair, and it was evident that his *chef* was no mean artist. I was particularly struck by the magnificent service of china and plate, all marked with an Imperial crown and the letter N. I was told that it had been specially issued for the occasion.

Then we said goodbye to 'Mike,' and returned to Sheerness for a final refit before proceeding to our station, the North American and West Indian. It had been a pleasure to serve under this gallant and distinguished officer. I had known him for some time, but not so intimately. Of a pleasant and manly exterior, he was also a good, just and firm officer, deservedly popular with all ranks. One of his chief characteristics was his voice, which was one of an agreeable timbre, and which carried a long way. He was a member of a naval family of repute.

Our final refit accomplished we left for our station towards the end of October, 1891, and my wife and I were parted for the first time. The separation was to last for nine months, the longest period we ever experienced. As a married man I was lucky in going out to the old station again, but it was the cause of my missing Australia, China and Japan.

The West Indies have always had a peculiar charm for me, and the lines that stand at the head of this chapter represent my humble efforts to express my opinion of them in a very concentrated form.

After leaving Sheerness we were hung up in the Downs by a furious gale. Here our first accident occurred ; a barque at anchor close by ranged along-

side, and to save our boats we turned them in ; unfortunately the slings of one slipped, and the boat fell on the foot of a man, crushing it badly. He had to be sent to hospital, so we signalled to the Coastguard, who sent off some sturdy Deal boatmen to take him on shore. It was most interesting to watch these men handle their boat in the heavy sea running ; it reminded me of the West Coast. When we arrived at Plymouth we had ample evidence of the havoc of the storm. Mount Edgcumbe had been struck by a blizzard that had cut a clean passage through the woods, as if intentionally done by the hand of man.

We soon left for Madeira *en route* to Bermuda, a few months before the *Serpent,* a sister ship of the *Tartar,* had been lost with all hands on Cape Finisterre, and I heard afterwards that there had been a sort of superstition that we would share her fate, but we did not even sight the Cape. A day or two at Madeira, where we found some pleasant compatriots at the hotel, enjoyed some tobogganing, and laid in some wine, and we were off again ' Westward Ho ' for Bermuda. Then followed a tedious voyage of twelve days, not without advantage, as it gave us an excellent opportunity to work up drills. This was the longest trip during the commission, the station being one of short distances. Long passages are now, in these days of steam, things of the past, yet still the idea seems to prevail that a warship wanders about in a vague way, somewhere at sea. The fact being that one of her chief purposes is to ' Show the Flag ' at places where, very often, her presence is of the greatest importance.

At Bermuda we found the Admiral, Sir George Watson, his flagship the *Bellerophon* and several ships belonging to the station. We were quite an innovation, being the first ship entirely dependent on steam, also we were the first arrivals with the alterations of the uniform committee that, if it did nothing else, originated uniformity and *inter alia* abolished the tunic, a garment of excessive vulgarity. We felt rather superior.

Bermuda had now been discovered by the Americans, but it had not become such a dumping-ground for their trippers. The odd part connected with their discovery is that they named it ' Stolen America,' which is a trifle on the cool side, considering that it never belonged to any one but the British.

Bermuda was a cheerful and hospitable place. The Navy and Army, the Residents, and many of the Americans, formed a very agreeable society, and to quote a somewhat hackneyed expression, 'Life was one continual round of Amusement.' The 'Tartars' were in the thick of it very early, and when we took our first departure for the South the flagship had the band up, and played us out to 'Where is now the Merry Party,' quite a nice compliment.

In no service was the spirit of camaraderie more in evidence than in the Navy. I speak in the past tense, because as regards the present I have no experience, but I have no reason to believe that it is different; I can't think it is. On the station in our time it was well exemplified, and the result was happiness. But it must not be supposed that we were merely Hedonists; the term is only applicable to a minute fraction, and after all they are to be found in every class. Naval officers have the care and welfare of their men at heart first and foremost, and in numerous ways they show, as a body, charitable and liberal dispositions.

During this stay at Bermuda a court martial was ordered on board the *Bellerophon*. A naval court martial is not an ordinary affair, and is always very ceremonious and impressive. They are always conducted in a great spirit of fairness, and if there is not too much law there is plenty of common sense, and the prisoner gets the benefit of the doubt. The sentence is promulgated at the conclusion of the trial, and the Admiralty (acting under the advice of the Judge Advocate of the Fleet), has the power of modifying it. It says a good deal for these courts that such modifications rarely occur. The ship on which the trial is to be held fires a gun and displays the Union Flag at the peak. Shortly before the allotted hour the members of the court arrive in full dress. They are received by the Captain of the ship and a guard of Marines. When the court has been sworn in and the prisoner brought in by the Provost-Marshal, it is open to the public. The prisoner is defended by an officer; if the prisoner is of the rank of officer his sword is laid on the table, and when the sentence is read, if he has been acquitted the hilt is turned towards him, so that a glance tells which way the verdict has gone. On acquittal the President returns the late prisoner his sword.

On the occasion referred to, we arrived on board and found the Flag-Captain looking worried ; it transpired that the prisoner had in some mysterious manner eluded the vigilance of his guard and had vanished, meanwhile the game of 'hide and seek' was being carried on. After about an hour's delay he was run to earth in the boiler-room ; he had fled there and taken cover over the boilers, but at last the heat drove him out.

Another court that I sat on, at Sheerness, had to try a Lieutenant for disrespect to the Commander-in-Command. He called the First-Lieutenant as a witness on his behalf. "Did the Captain treat me in conformance with the Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions, which lay down that the Commanding Officer is to treat his officers with firmness but consideration?" he asked. The First-Lieutenant fixed his eyes on the Commander and replied, "I saw a good deal of firmness, but not much consideration." The young fellow did not get off, but we felt sorry for him, for the Commander had a name for trying his officers, and bore a reputation for 'firmness' that he maintained for the rest of his career.

When the *Achilles* collided with the *Invincible* in the Mediterranean during tactics, at the subsequent court martial the Captain of the former ship, Sir Algernon Heneage, was asked what he would have done if he had been in charge instead of the officer of the watch? To which he made the cryptic reply, "If I had been where I was not, I might have done what I did not do!" The court had to be satisfied with that. This officer could not be bothered with learning more than one chief engineer's name, so he always addressed them by the name of the first one he had served with. Remonstrance was vain ; they had to get used to it. His chief hobby was dress, and he was always immaculate. One of his foibles was to send his lingerie to England to be properly laundered. His valet used to walk round him until every speck had been removed, and then pat him on the shoulder—as is done with divers—to signify that he might issue forth without fear of criticism. Another very conservative Captain discovered that one of his midshipmen had signed with a new signature. "How is this?" he demanded. "My father has come in for some property, and had to change his name," was the boy's explanation. "You joined as Smith, and

Smith you will remain until the end of the commission," was the satisfaction he got.

The above courts martial remind me of an officer who was tried for indulging not wisely but too well. He called his servant as a witness. "Was I drunk or sober when I turned in?" he asked. "You was sober," was the reply. "What made you think the prisoner was sober?" inquired a member of the court. "Because he told me to call him early, quite natural like." A short pause ensued, and then the President asked, "Did he assign any particular reason for wishing to be called early?" "Yes, Sir, he said he was going to be Queen of the May." The prisoner was *not* acquitted.

We spent Christmas, 1891, at Bermuda, our pleasure being very much lessened by a distressing accident that occurred. We lost a torpedo, and in the search for it the boat that was conducting it capsized under sail, and a Warrant Officer and three men were drowned; this was a sad illustration of the treacherous squalls that occur among these islands. These casualties, together with a death from heat apoplexy, were the only ones sustained during the commission, at the end of which we were able to plume ourselves that we had not had a single court martial.

We left before the end of the year for the West Indies, the first port of call being Port-au-Prince, Hayti. This island was an object-lesson of the black man's incapacity to run his own show. Since the French had evacuated the island, driven out probably by disease, it had gone utterly to the bad and had lost all the prosperity it formerly enjoyed. All Europeans were indiscriminately murdered, and even those who had any white strain in them shared the same fate. The result was a nation of bloodthirsty, ignorant savages, who had lapsed into a condition of superstitious paganism embracing the practice of revolting rites, of which Sir Spencer St. John gives an admirable account in his book *A Black Republic*. Accompanied by Consul Tweedie and two of my officers, I called on President Hyppolyte at the palace, a ramshackle, ill-kept building, furnished in excruciatingly bad taste, the pictures and engravings being especially meretricious. Except for his colour (a sooty black), the President had a European appearance. Despite the early hour (9 a.m.), he was in evening dress, and was surrounded by a 'Brilliant Staff' of negroes in every

kind of gorgeous uniform. With the aid of the Consul we exchanged compliments and platitudes, drank some very sweet champagne, and departed with more compliments. The uniforms of the troops outside the palace contrasted humorously with those inside. They were conspicuous by their absence ! They were an unsightly crowd of bestial-looking ruffians, who received hardly any pay, and lived chiefly upon what they could pilfer from the populace.

The language is a bastard French patois. After the ceremony we drove out with the Consul to his country residence on the adjacent hills. After dinner we heard some fascinating stories of Haytian history, of Toussaint l'Ouverture and Dessalines, the first negro Presidents, who, assisted by the mortality among the French troops under General Leclerc (brother-in-law of Bonaparte), succeeded in enforcing the evacuation of the island. Both these men were assassinated. We were told of Christophe, their successor, who built the citadel of La Ferrière, near Cap Haitien, one of the wonders of the Western Hemisphere. Near it stands the palace of Sans Souci, erected by the same man ; the former was designed by two French officers of Engineers who were prisoners of war, and Christophe murdered them on its completion. Christophe had himself crowned as Emperor Henri I, and created an extensive nobility (among them a Duke of Limonade), and was himself assassinated in 1821, a fitting retribution for such a bloodthirsty scoundrel. Of twenty-five Presidents since that time, only one completed his full service, fifteen being driven out of the country, six assassinated, one died of wounds, and another committed suicide. We arrived at the conclusion that the billet was not worth having. Several of those who escaped owed it to the good offices of the British Consul, whose quarters were inviolate, and in which numbers sought refuge during the indiscriminate massacres resulting on a deposition. Not long before our arrival one of the Presidents got away by walking down to the jetty with the British Consul on one side and a Captain of a British warship on the other ; the ravening mob did not dare to touch him.

The next morning we drove into the squalid, ill-kept city and visited the Cathedral. It was built by the French, and the Catholic religion is still nominally that of the people. Here we found a few sad-faced French

Nuns, the only white women in the city, busied in their pious work of looking after the building. But what drew our attention most was a picture of the Virgin and Child. The Madonna was depicted as a Negress and the Child as a Mulatto. Too much shocked to feel amused, we left the building. We left this island of magnificent scenery without regret. All the splendid tropical flowers flourish here in profusion. Truly every prospect pleases, and only man is vile. The United States stepped in in 1915 at the request of the French Government and assumed control; since then extraordinary results have been achieved under a firm and judicious administration.

Port Royal, Jamaica, was soon reached, but we had only been there two days when the Commodore, whose flag flew in the *Urgent*, sent for me and told me there was a case of yellow fever in the hospital, and he should send us on a cruise round the island for precaution's sake, and we left for Morant Bay on the 13th of January. Here, on the 15th, we received the news of the death of the Duke of Clarence.

A barque was alongside the wharf and part of her cargo was oranges. Some of the darkies started to throw them at each other; one of them missed the mark and struck a sailor in the face. Furious, he seized a large stone and hurled it at the nearest nigger; it struck him on the side of the head, whereupon he turned round and said, "Look hyar, Sah, it's oranges we's frowing, not lemmins." These people have enormously hard skulls, and their weak spot is the shin; this they know, and when fighting kick most viciously at each other and also use their heads to butt with.

At Montego Bay we got our first experience of ticks. The bite of these insects is extraordinarily irritating; it is very minute, but it sucks your blood and swells to the size of a ladybird and then you become aware of it, to your great discomfort. It leaves a nasty little sore that heals slowly and often causes fever. We got ours through shooting pigeons up a small river and incautiously landing in the grass where ticks abound; this is the result of man's interference with nature. To kill off the rats he introduced the mongoose, then the rats took up their homes in the houses, so the hungry mongoose turned their attention to the birds and almost exterminated the ground doves and others that kept down the ticks and insects. The moral is 'Let well Alone.' One of the

men took me over a sugar mill, the proprietor of which told me that the sugar only covered the working expenses, but the rum gave a handsome profit. Pussyfoot was not on the warpath yet.

Here we had our first cricket match and suffered an honourable defeat, the event being made an occasion for a social gathering, which included all the everybodies and all the nobodies of the neighbourhood. The darkies take a great interest in cricket.

A telegram from the Commodore moved us on to Santiago de Cuba with orders to keep moving until we reached Bermuda via Nassau, New Providence. Santiago was still under Spanish rule, and I could see no alteration. It still boasted a fine military band that we thoroughly enjoyed, in company with the Consul, who was an Englishman, very hospitable and acquainted with every one. The Señoritas did not seem to have deteriorated as regards looks, anyway. The Spanish control of Cuba was still weakening, and only nominal over the greater part of the island. It only needed a little energetic action on the part of the United States of America to precipitate its downfall.

On leaving we proceeded up the old Bahama Channel, and in the Florida Straits found the Gulf Stream running at the rate of over four knots an hour, very helpful. I had looked forward to revisiting Nassau with pleasurable anticipations only to be somewhat damped by discovering that all my old friends had gone. Not surprising after an interval of twenty years. It is odd that some of our people do not visit this place in the winter.

Having been absent but six weeks from Bermuda, we were able to take up the thread of things again very easily. The ship was ordered up to Hamilton, a most ideal anchorage. Completely surrounded by land, consisting of innumerable islands, it is reached by a tortuous channel, not available for heavy draught ships. Moored in a snug position off the town we proceeded to enjoy life thoroughly. Bermuda is celebrated for its wrecks and derelicts, and just abreast of the town one of these victims of the sea lay on the rocks with its broadside fully exposed. An enterprising jeweller had hired it and painted on its side "Go to Childs for jewellery." One morning the town woke up and was confronted with the astounding request to "Go to Hell for jewellery"; some

wag had made the alteration during the night. I don't believe the 'Tartars' had anything to do with it.

In March, 1892, I bought my first bicycle, a solid tyre, and proceeded to explore these fascinating islands. Probably the bike has been the most enjoyable invention of man. I say '*has* been,' for those who used it for pleasure have been driven off the roads. For the proletariat it is still the greatest boon. My use for it continued for twenty-six years, then I reluctantly abandoned it, for even the country lanes were no longer sacred to the bicyclist. We had several in the ship, and may be said to have introduced it into the West Indies, where, when we landed for an early morning ride, the darkies gave vent to their astonishment by such cries as "Hi! See de Man-o-war Buccras. Dey no use for de Buggy now."

The Admiral's period of command had expired, and Sir John Ommanney Hopkins came out in the *Blake* to relieve him. The *Blake* was a first-class cruiser of 9,000 tons, and we were no longer the only fore-and-after, and very shortly the *Magicienne* arrived; the station was being modernized. Custom dies hard, and we had been supplied with a complete set of fore and aft sails that were about as much use as feathers on a pig; however, later on, they made excellent deck-cloths. For the benefit of the uninformed, I will explain that deck-cloths were used to cover the decks when they had been scrubbed to a spotless condition, especially on Sundays, so as to avoid unnecessary cleaning; naturally the First-Lieutenant kept an open eye for such commodities. While in the *Condor* at Constantinople, an Italian barque caught fire and we sent our boats, but she burned to the water's edge, rather a fine sight, yet somehow our boats returned with enough sails to make deck-cloths for the ship. How it was managed I know not; I wasn't there. And we received the thanks of the Italian Ambassador for our invaluable services.

We parted with Sir George Watson with regret. He was popular on the station, and a new hand at the bellows is always an object of suspicion. But we were not long in finding out that the new man was one of the best. He said to me once, "My name is Easy, as long as my officers do their jobs properly; if not, let them stand from under." He was very capable, very shrewd, and with a great sense of humour. We soon became devoted to him. He had been at the Admiralty doing very

strenuous work, and came out determined to have a good time. This he did, and so did those under him, for he was both thoughtful for others and considerate. The 'Blakes' won deserved popularity, and in due course we became 'Chummy Ships,' not always usual between the great and the small.

One of the first proceedings of the new man was to inspect the ships, and our turn came in due course; this ordeal terminated in our case most happily, the Admiral being very complimentary, so we made a good start. It was particularly gratifying to me, for the First-Lieutenant, Cooper-Key, had been indefatigable, and had the men in capital order and discipline. Our engine-room department was excellent also, and we had reason to be proud of our little ship.

American Yachts had begun to visit Bermuda, and at Hamilton some lay close to us. There was the *Oneida,* a fine steam yacht, the owner, E. C. Benedict, with several friends on board; a most cheery lot. The *Golden Rod,* Mr. Watt, with a party of ladies, and a large sailing yacht, the *Alert,* with J. Husted and Malcolm J. Motley on board, the latter a fine sporting specimen of the best American type. We got very friendly, a friendship that has been kept up to this day, and, although we do not meet very often, we constantly correspond, and he has kept me supplied with United States literature for many years.

Orders for dispersal were now issued, and ours came for the West Indies again, and on May 17, 1892, we left for Barbadoes. We had had a cheerful time and the band of the flagship played us out again. At Barbadoes I found the Governor, Sir James Hay, was an old friend; I had known him at Sierra Leone. He was extremely hospitable, a bachelor and good company. When paying a visit the butler always offered you a cocktail, and the first question that His Excellency put was, "Have you had your cocktail?" Cocktails were made from falernum, a red liquor which I believe is a product of rum. While here a German ship, the *Arcona,* arrived and took a pilot to bring them in. As the place is an open anchorage, this showed—to say the least—an excessive caution. We got to know these people; they were already suffering from swollen heads, and the Captain had the face to remark to me that our Army had always copied theirs and that now our Navy was doing the

same. To this I replied that I liked his damned cheek, but at all events our Navy had not sunk so low as to take pilots, and that we still believed in doing that sort of work ourselves. These people were always trying to stir up mischief. Having no property of their own, they used one of our islands as a base, from which to carry out target practice. The French objected and made representations to our Government, who requested the Germans to desist, so they transferred to the island of St. Thomas and found the Danes more complaisant. The Captain of the *Arcona* remarked on this to me, and said sneeringly that he supposed our Government was afraid of the French.

Orders from our Senior Officer took us off hotfoot to La Guaira. A revolution was on in Venezuela and there were British interests to protect. On arrival, the Consul came off full of grievances, which I listened to sympathetically, and the *Tourmaline* not being in harbour we started off to join her at Tucacas, where the fighting was going on. Here we found her and handed over the chief charges of our mission, some bullion and lingerie that the Captain's careless steward had left behind. Tucacas was the scene of some bloody fighting between the opposing parties, and while we were there the loyalists succeeding in driving out the revolutionaries. We landed and I had a good look at the victorious army. It was the most extraordinary collection of scaramouches imaginable, rifles of all sorts with bayonets that they were apparently unable or too lazy to unfix. A British regiment would have cleared up the whole crowd in a very short time. Tucacas, the bone of contention, was the chief port for shipping ore, and a vile place. We then paid a short visit to Curaçoa, a neat and tidy place under the Dutch, and after despatching a sheaf of telegrams, returned to Barbadoes ; however, we were soon off once more, and after dropping a new Governor at St. Vincent, and christening him with thirteen guns, we were at La Guaira again.

Since my visit in the *Constance* a British company had constructed a narrow-gauge railway to Caracas. It was quite an engineering feat, for the line in many places looked down some tremendous precipices and wound about in an extraordinary manner. From the rear of the train you could sometimes see the engine, apparently going in the opposite direction. At this time there

had been a very bad landslip up the line at the top of one of the cañons where there was a drop of 2,000 feet. The Scot Manager, Mr. Ross, very kindly invited us to visit the spot, and he also took some of the men. We found the line quite impassable, but there was a large party at work on it, and it was hoped that the traffic would soon be restored.

It was remarkable how Scots predominated in that part of the world. We used to chaff Moubray about it. It was a safe bet when we visited any of these places on the Spanish Main that we would find a Scot, and they all seemed to be doing well, but we heard of one young fellow who proved to be the exception to the rule. He had developed into a gay Lothario, which, while it made him popular with the fair sex, was not conducive to business. His Christian name being John, he was known appropriately as Don Juan. After a time he started up-country, and all communication with him ceased. His relatives at length despatched a sleuth to trail him, who found no difficulty in doing so. At distant intervals he encountered disconsolate females, and at last, far up-country, he met one who bore a red-headed child in her arms, it was the posthumous child of 'Don Juan the Scot.' The search was ended.

Writing about Scots reminds me that we used to get a good many in the medical service of the Navy. One of these, having newly joined, had been celebrating the occasion on shore. When he came off the Captain (who was a little man and rather pompous) was standing on the quarterdeck, and very soon noticed his condition. "Mr. Macpherson, you're drunk, Sir." Sandy, who was a big, burly fellow, approached, bent over him, and putting a hand on his shoulder, replied, "There is nae doot of that, laddie."

We remained on this service until the end of July, visiting Grenada and Barbadoes occasionally. At the former place we moored snugly in the Carenage with our stern hauled in to the jetty. The telephone was then brought on board, and with the hospitable little club under our lee we were well situated. The Governor, the Hon. Sir W. Hely-Hutchinson, very hospitably invited me up to Government House. He was a remarkably active man in mind and body, but had a habit of rousing me out at 6 a.m. for a morning ride, the pleasure of which, however, compensated for such early hours on

shore. In this way we visited the beauty spots of the neighbourhood, among them the 'Grand Etang,' an extinct volcano ; the crater now performs a more useful office as a reservoir of extremely pure water. Another point of interest was a precipitous hill overlooking the sea, known as the 'Morne des Sauteurs.' From its summit numbers of Caribs threw themselves, preferring to die thus rather than by the hands of the French.

This deservedly popular Governor made a hobby of orchids, and had a fine collection. Under his patronage the Botanical Gardens were some of the finest in the West Indies. Sir Walter afterwards became Governor of the Cape. A very cheery fellow was H. Pipon-Schooles, who kept open-house to us. He was the Attorney-General, and was afterwards transferred to Jamaica in the same capacity. He finished his career as Chief Justice at Gib, for which he was knighted. I used to see a good deal of him in London, and enjoyed many a festive dinner with him at the Wyndham.

During one of our visits to La Guaira it became necessary for me to go to Caracas to visit our Consul-General. We had no Minister, having broken off our diplomatic relations, and the German Minister, Baron von Kleiste, was fulfilling that duty. The Germans, being more slim, were trying to keep in with these people. The *Magon,* a French warship, and the *Arcona* were in port, and their Captains were invited to go up too. The Frenchman declined, and called on me to explain that until the line was repaired he was not going to travel by it and take risks. Alluding to the landslip, across which planks had been laid for transit, he said, "I should get *vertige, vertige.*" That being the case, I recommended him to stay behind. The German, however, accompanied me ; in due time we arrrived at the slip on which gangs were still working. The train pulled up at a safe distance and we could see one waiting on the other side. When we reached the landslip we found a platform, two planks wide, across the breach, no handrail, vertical rock on the inside, and a drop of about 2,000 feet on the outside ; it was rather terrifying. The German advanced and I followed, carrying a dressing bag ; halfway across he began to shake, and turning round, said, "Gif me your hand." I did *not* give him my hand, but caught him by the wrist, trusting that if he did fall I should be able to let go in time and not be dragged over.

Thus steadied, he crossed in safety. On the return trip I was not in his vicinity.

It was very pleasant to see Caracas again. In my midshipman days we had ridden over on mules, a joyous and reckless throng. We were sobered up by the information imparted by our guide that the occasional heap of stones that we passed indicated that a murder had been committed on the spot, and that every pious passer added one to the heap. I am afraid we were not so overburdened with piety. At that visit we had busnacked about on our own, now I had to be under the wing of the Consul, who took every care of me, and I don't think I enjoyed myself so much. It is a delightful place to live in, and when I found the man who was our Minister at my former visit had, on retirement, remained to finish his days there, I was not surprised.

The rebels now recaptured Tucacas and commandeered the *Barquisemeto,* a steamer belonging to a British company. This would not do at all, and we set out in hot pursuit, ran her to a finish, and convoyed her back to Tucacas, where we put her out of action by removing some of her machinery. We spent some time on the way at target practice, selecting a convenient island on which to place the target. At the first round a crowd of scarlet ibis broke cover and afforded a most unusual and pretty sight. They remained on the wing until we had completed our practice. Moubray hurried on shore and bagged some of these handsome birds, that, when cooked, were as good as the ordinary curlew, of which they are a species. I was presented with one, and had it stuffed ; it now stands in my hall.

At last we got away from this storm in a teacup and returned to Bermuda. On the passage Moubray and I saw what we considered to be a sea-serpent, but decided to say nothing about it, having due regard to the scepticism of the British public with regard to sailors' yarns. I consider that there is every possibility of there being such reptiles of the deep. If we have such things as gigantic squids and octopuses, why not sea-serpents? Nobody would have believed in the Okapi until Johnston discovered it, not many years ago. The sea-serpent has been reputably reported by several observers, and I shall continue to believe in it. It is probably extremely shy, and, as we now know that vibrations from a ship in motion can be sensed a very long distance, these creatures,

whose sensitive organs must be very highly developed, can have no difficulty in avoiding us. Sea-snakes are common objects in the Indian Ocean, where I have seen them twenty feet in length.

At Bermuda orders for Halifax awaited us, which meant no delay on our part. On the passage, while steaming fifteen knots a man fell overboard. We picked him up and were under way again full speed in fifteen minutes, a smart piece of work.

At Halifax I found my wife and boy living at the 'Waverley.' We settled down for a good time, which we got. I found my old friends of the Leicesters stationed there, having come out from England. Dances, dinners and picnics were the order of the day, and we have a very vivid recollection of one of the latter when Charles Bayly, the Commander of the flagship, drove a party of us in a brake, horsed by four greys, to a spot about ten miles out where we joined the remainder of the party. We galloped all the way, escorted by mounted midshipmen. Bayly was racing against the Flag-Lieutenant Sandeman, who drove a tandem. The road being narrow, we started at intervals, and the race was decided on time. Bayly won by a narrow margin. The going was fierce.

After a time we left for Quebec and Montreal. At Quebec we found the Governor-General and Lady Derby, and I had the honour of dining with them that evening and attending their ball. This man, who filled the high office of Governor-General with dignity and credit to himself, was one of the best type of our nobility, such as should always be appointed to these posts. He and Lady Derby were deservedly popular.

We went on to Montreal. The river between the two cities (a distance of 111 miles), is an eloquent testimony to the efficiency of the Canadian Marine Department. Well buoyed, deepened, and the passage straightened when required with excellent and prominent leading marks, it is easy to negotiate. Just before arriving at Montreal the current suddenly increases to a rate of seven knots, and almost seems to bring the ship up. Here we went alongside the wharf.

Montreal is a beautiful city; the houses are mostly built of stone, and there are some very fine ones, especially in the suburbs, where the rich live. The hospitable residents inundated us with invitations. My wife

arrived and we put up at the 'Windsor,' a very large and comfortable hotel. Our room looked out on the river, and the first morning I was puzzled by some extraordinary-looking objects looking like large junks; they resolved themselves into the peculiar piers of the railway bridge that spans the river. We drove up to the top of the mountain and admired the panorama spread before us. The city boasts, with reason, of its theatre and some fine cafés; the cuisine is excellent, a combination of the best English and French.

My wife and I started for Niagara by rail. Sleeping in a Pullman was not altogether ideal. We arrived at Toronto the next day and failed to 'connect,' in other words missed the train, so we spent the intervening time in driving about the city. Not being rather Frenchified like Montreal and to a greater extent Quebec, it was entirely Canadian.

At Niagara we put up at another 'Windsor,' where we got a good view of the falls from our bedroom window. The first day we devoted to the falls, and visited Goat's Island and then the 'Cave of the Winds.' When I penetrated behind the fall the first object that met my view was a young woman indulging in a shower bath; however, conventions were strictly observed, for she was enveloped in a waterproof. The next day we visited the rapids and whirlpool, the former terrifying and fascinating as it boils through the restricted and rocky passage, and the latter menacingly sullen as if controlled by an evil spirit. The falls have been described often enough; we found them all we had heard and then more. Their grandeur seemed to grow upon you, and not the least charm is the deep diapason it emits, much more noticeable at night. From the suspension bridge it was intensely interesting to watch the little steamer *Maid of the Mist* nosing about below.

We returned to Kingston, after a farewell drive round the Canadian shore and through the park, passing the famous Lundy Lane. At Kingston we embarked on the steamboat *Spartan*, with a merry party of five mids who were returning to the *Blake*. We threaded our way through the thousand islands, and then prepared for the sensation of the voyage, namely, the shooting of the Lachine Rapids. Great preparations were made, and an Indian pilot took the helm, but it proved to be all cry and very little wool; in short, a very tame affair.

We returned very much pleased with our trip, and had a few more days of the city. Before leaving the 'Tartars' gave a very successful little evening 'At Home,' as some sort of slight return for the lavish hospitality we had received. It was well after midnight before the merry party broke up.

The following morning we started, our departure being witnessed by a large crowd, music being supplied by the band of the 6th Fusilier Regiment of Canada. We were as loath to leave as they were to part with us. We arrived and moored the following morning at Quebec just in time to participate in a picnic to the Falls of Montmorency. We put up at the 'Florence,' in the lower town. Two days more of festivities and this delightful cruise came to an end. In company with *Blake* we returned to Halifax and our quarters at the 'Waverley.'

The woodcock were in, and we got some shooting and fishing in the lakes, where there was an abundance of trout. Our most successful Shikari was Moubray, who generally returned with a bigger bag than any one else, and in the fishing department Alderson was an easy first. He was also the best boat-sailer on the station. For my part I was but a dabbler at these sports now. Was it the demands of a married life or a greater development of parlour tricks?

These happy days continued until October, when the time came for us to leave for Bermuda. By the regulations a Captain cannot take his own wife to sea, but they do not forbid him to take another man's, so it was arranged that the *Tartar* should take Mrs. Hamilton, the wife of the Captain of the *Blake*, and that the *Buzzard* should take mine. Of course I was able to take our boy and his nurse. 'Buzzy' Browne of the *Buzzard* was a determined old bachelor, but one of the best; in addition to my wife he took Mrs. Hamilton's French maid.

On the first night there was a bad sea, and the little *Buzzard* was very lively, so my wife very wisely sought the seclusion that the cabin grants. The maid, quite overcome, flopped on to a sofa. When Buzzy came down and inquired about her the coxswain replied, "I've carried her to her cabin, taken off her frock and put her to bed." The next morning my wife was dressing under difficulties when the ship gave a heavy roll that pre-

cipitated her, and the rest of her kit, through the door. The coxswain, still playing the guardian angel, came to her rescue, remarking, "Why ever did I leave you to dress yourself?" Handy men these sailors!

Through the kindness of the O.C. of troops we were given the messhouse at Boaz Island, about a mile from the dockyard. Here we were thoroughly comfortable, and enjoyed the delightful climate of Bermuda winter and the gaieties of the island. The messhouse was for the officers of the detachment (temporarily withdrawn) at Boaz. Some men of The Kings had been left behind in charge of the transport, and they were particularly kind to our small boy, taking him out in the cart and giving him a stall in the stable in which he kept his toy horse. When the regiment left, these men turned him over to their successors of the Royal Berks, and telling them that he had never heard a bad word from any of them, asked them to look after him too, and treat him in the same way. The above only came to my knowledge accidentally, and my readers can judge how much we appreciated the behaviour of these good fellows. I have always had a warm corner for Tommy, which was intensified when our boy joined the Army and is still more so now. The same applied to the bluejackets, who, I know, never said or did anything likely to affect his character injuriously; he was among them and was a great favourite. At length some officers came to Boaz, and the G.O.C. shifted us into some very comfortable married officers' quarters that were vacant. A great industry had sprung up, namely, the cultivation of lilies and onions. From the æsthetic to the prosaic. The fields of lilies were a beautiful sight, and immense quantities were despatched to the States, where they commanded a good market. As for the onions, they were still more remunerative and of much importance to the growers. So highly were they considered, that if you wished to pay a man a compliment you called him an onion. Christmas Day, 1892, was spent here, and on the 27th we left for Port Royal with drafts for the *Urgent* and orders to join the Admiral at Antigua for the winter cruise.

The cruise lasted until the end of February, 1893, when we were detached from the squadron at Jamaica and sent to Trujillo, Spanish Honduras, in response to an S.O.S. from the Consul. The winter cruises were

agreeable on the social side. The usual programme at each island was a dinner and ball, given by His Excellency or His Honour, another by the Citizens, and a Fleet Regatta and cricket match. At the regattas the 'Tartars' more than held their own.

At Trujillo we found a very frightened Dago Consul; also that although there was a revolution on (the usual condition), there was not a rebel within fifty miles of the town. This we learnt from the invariable Scot, who promptly appeared from his ranche and gave us his frank opinion of Great Britain's representative. A portion of the army (ragged according to custom) was holding the town, and a cut-throat lot they looked, as they are, for it is their invariable rule to slit the throats of all prisoners; it saves a lot of trouble. This place was a glaring example of the folly of having a native as Consul; of course they always try to hunt with the hounds, and run with the hare. At length, having partially restored the nerves of this man, we left for Vera Cruz, calling at Port Cortez, Livingstone and Belize, British Honduras, *en route*. Before leaving I told the Consul that if the rebels came near the place he must wrap himself up in the British flag and defy them to touch him. But our Scot declared that he had not the pluck of a louse, and would die like a cur in a ditch. I was sure, however, that the Scot would have given a good account of himself. These affairs are chronic, and greed of money is at the bottom of them all. A man gets himself made President, by fair means or foul, and lo, all the taxes flow into his pocket, and some fine day he makes his get-away with the spoils, usually to Paris, a city that has a great fascination for these gentry. While we were in Colombia the President became aware that certain people were plotting his downfall, one of them being his own brother. He invited him to dinner and did him of the best; when the smokes came on he gave him a cigar and after a time asked him how he liked it. "It's a very good one," was the reply. "I'm glad of that," said the President; "make the most of it, for it is the last that you will ever smoke." If his brother grasped the import of this somewhat cryptic speech, the smoke must have been a long one! At its conclusion he was taken out and shot. There is a refinement of cruelty about this fratricidal affair that smacks of Borgian methods. Here would be the man

to deal with the Bolsheviks, but he would have to be enjoined not to waste dinners and good cigars on them.

Livingstone is in Guatemala, and is interesting as being the last home of the Caribs, who were deported here from the British West Indies by a short-sighted Government, for they would have made excellent citizens. These people quite mobbed me. They spoke an extraordinary lingo which resembled English, and which I was unable to understand, and they took care to tell me that they were British and not Guatemalans. It was rather pathetic. At Belize I found an old friend in the Governor, Sir Alfred Moloney, whom I had known at Nassau when A.D.C. to the Governor, and whom I had met frequently in London.

We arrived at the old port of Vera Cruz. The walls of the fort of St. Juan d'Ulloa that guards the anchorage still retain the iron rings by which the galleons used to be moored, and there is an old-world look about the place. It bears an unenviable and deserved reputation for being a hotbed of yellow fever. The following day a party of us left for Mexico City, where we spent a few days. The railway was constructed by a British company. The distance to the city is under 200 miles, but longer by rail owing to engineering difficulties. The scenery is gorgeous, especially during the ascent to the plains on which the city lies, the rise being 8,000 feet. The country is spread out like a panorama, fertile and blooming, in strong contrast to the gloomy cañons and fearsome precipices along the faces of which the railroad mounts. As you passed up one side you saw the line ascending on the other. Orizaba, a pyramidal mountain, 18,000 feet high, with a summit clothed with perpetual snow (very refreshing in this climate), and Popocatepetl, an active volcano of the same height, were passed in succession. From the former the Spanish Ecclesiastics and Hidalgos procured snow to cool their drinks, and from the latter the warrior Cortez obtained sulphur to manufacture gunpowder. Artificial ice and T.N.T. have changed all that.

We put up at the 'Gillow,' and that night I had the pleasure of dining with our Minister, Sir Spencer St. John, whom I have already referred to. I spent a most instructive evening with this man, from whom I parted at a late hour with much regret. Having exhausted its wonders and completed our stay in this curious old

city, we descended to the heat of Vera Cruz. Before leaving I executed a commission that had been entrusted to me, namely, to purchase a complete set of Mexican stamps. I believe some of them now adorn the collection of a Royal Philatelist.

We were now bound for Bermuda, taking Havana and Nassau *en route*. It was our first visit to the former place, and we found that yellow fever, small-pox and typhus were raging, so our visit was curtailed. With the Spanish the above were everyday matters, and as the sewage of the city was discharged into the harbour it was not surprising. A few years later the blowing up of the U.S. ship *Maine* set fire to the torch, that, by the time it had burned out, had witnessed the expulsion of the Spaniard from his colonial possessions in the West Indies and the Philippines. One cannot help sympathizing, to a certain extent, with a nation that produced Columbus, Cortez and Pizarro, but, in modern parlance, they asked for it and they got it.

So we did not stop long at Havana, that truly Spanish city of the West. At Nassau we again met the *Onieda* with E. C. Benedict on board. On arrival at Bermuda we found that a squadron of four ships was going to New York, on the invitation of the United States, to represent the British at the tercentenary celebration of the discovery of America by Columbus, and that we were to be one of them. In accordance with the programme we left on April 13th for Hampton Roads, where the International Fleet was to assemble. The British Squadron consisted of the *Blake, Australia, Magicienne* and *Tartar*. At Hampton Roads we found an American Fleet of fourteen ships and a goodly number of foreigners. We made a good evolution when anchoring, coming in at a good bat on a strong flood tide. After letting-go the anchor we swung round in a way that tautened out the cables in a most conspicuous manner ; after an anxious moment or two we rode peacefully in line. It was a bit of risky swagger, but worth it, with all the foreigners looking on. One of the American Captains remarked admiringly on it to me, and asked if our Admiral always came in in such style, to which I replied, generally, faster, but we had to allow for the flood tide. We were out to cut a dash, and this was not the only occasion. Among the heterogeneous collection of warships there were specimens of all sorts,

from a Brazilian battleship, the *Aquidaban,* to the *Van Speyk,* a Dutch jackass-frigate. The former looked an unsightly monster. The latter was old style, as were the Russians *Dimitri Donskoi, General Admiral* and *Rhynda.* On board the *Dimitri* was the Grand Duke Alexander, a lieutenant and cousin of the Czar. The *Blake* was undoubtedly the finest craft present, but for some reason the American officers seemed to fancy the *Australia,* probably on account of her being partially armoured.

The craft that attracted most attention were the Caravels the *Santa Marta, Pinta* and *Niña.* They were built in Spain and were exact reproductions of the original Squadron of Columbus ; they had been towed out. The *Santa Marta* (Columbus' flagship) was only 200 tons, and 75 feet long, most of the accommodation was above the waterline, and the poop and forecastle towered upward, giving the impression of instability and crankiness. Each had three masts, and had somewhat the appearance of junks or dhows, but more respectable. I spent some time on each, and felt a profound admiration for the man who went out into the unknown in such diminutive craft, manned by a superstitious and mutinous crew.

The American people were our hosts, and they spread themselves out to be good ones. Most of the official events were to be observed at New York, but the Secretary of the Navy opened the ball by entertaining all Admirals and Captains on board the *Dolphin,* the Navy Board yacht. The company included officers from Argentine, Brazil, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Russia and Spain. After dinner I had a good insight as to what occurred at the tower of Babel.

During the afternoon, while walking with Bayly, of the flagship, we came across an old gun enshrined in a shed. We incautiously inquired of the gaping crowd what its history was, and how it came to be there. A small darky took upon himself the office of spokesman, and said, "Guess we took it from the British" ; the crowd chuckled. Further on we met with another one, this time we forebore to ask questions, but still the crowd chuckled, whereupon I remarked, "Guess we had better vamose, or we shall be captured too." More chuckles, under cover of which we withdrew. These guns had been taken when Cornwallis surrendered at York Town. The Americans take more care of, and pride in their battle trophies than some of our people. I can recall

the officials of St. Paul's Cathedral burning several captured flags that had been discovered stowed away and forgotten in the crypt.

Opposite our anchorage at Newport News was the huge Hygeia Hotel, accommodating 3,000 people ; they don't do things by halves in the States ! Every night a ball was held in it ; officers in uniform were permitted to ask any girl to dance—it was a grand time for the boys. In this hotel I found some old Constantinople friends of mine. I went over to Portsmouth and inspected the little Navy yard there, quite homely !

On the 24th of April the fleet weighed. We steamed in two lines, and our squadron led the foreign line, the other being composed of U.S. Ships. No one appeared to object to our leading the foreign line, but there was a good deal of friction among those who followed as to order of precedence. Eventually the Russians followed us, with the French next ; the Germans had to take a back seat. Admiral Gherardi, of the American Fleet, must have exercised some tact. We anchored in New York Bay the first night, and on the next morning we made the grand entry. Past the statue of Liberty, the Battery and Governor's Island, past the business portion of the city, and then anchored in two lines abreast the residential quarters. We found ourselves off 76th Street. New York turned out in thousands, the banks of the Hudson were lined with people, and every available steamer was chartered and crowded to the utmost capacity. The papers were very complimentary to the British Squadron, allusions were made to the Red Cross of St. George, and warm tribute was paid to the correct station kept by us. I think we earned it.

We had that day and night to recuperate from Newport News, and to prepare for the coming struggle. It was as well, for it proved to be the most strenuous affair most of us ever went through. As a commencement every New York Club of position made us honorary members. Those that made most impression on me were the Racquet and Tennis Club (that included among other features a real tennis court, a gymnasium and Turkish bath), the Manhattan and the Union League. The American clubs are far less starchy than ours. The hospitality of the members was most lavish. For example, Bayly and I, having a free evening, determined to devote it to a theatre, going to the Union League for dinner.

Here we were recognized by some of the members and promptly invited to dine. We explained that we proposed going to see a *Trip to China Town,* and must leave early, but they would take no refusal. After a most enjoyable dinner with these good fellows we left, and on arrival at the theatre the driver informed us that the cab was paid for, and inside I was handed two stalls with our late hosts' compliments. If this isn't hospitality, what is? Our friends, Motley and Husted, put in an early appearance and introduced us to the Racquet Club, and among other experiences I owe these two a unique one. With five other friends they entertained me with a dinner at the Waldorf. It began at eight o'clock and lasted after midnight. The experience consisted in the fact that for the first time I saw a man go under the table, where, for the time, he was left.

But I must not weary my readers with too many personal reminiscences, but will get on to the public events. These were a review and reception by the President, a naval parade and a grand public ball. To review us the President went on board the *Dolphin* and steamed down the lines, receiving the usual honours as he passed each ship. The *Dolphin* then anchored ahead of the International Fleet, and Admirals and Captains went on board to be presented to Mr. and Mrs. Grover Cleveland. The President was a big man and inclined to stoutness, but had a face that bore indications of capacity and firmness. His wife was the proverbial fine woman, and well turned out; we had an opportunity of conversing with them. Politics and such-like topics are to be avoided on such occasions. That night the Fleet illuminated, and by universal agreement the British were easily first. In anticipation of this function we had laid in extra electric stores at Bermuda.

The ball, held in Madison Gardens, was a marvellous affair. It opened with a procession of the foreign officers in national groups, and we marched to the strains of the 'Washington Post,' played by Sousa's celebrated band. A dense crowd packed the building, and we made the entire circuit, passing the President and the leading officials of the Republic amid the applause of the spectators. I felt rather as if I was taking part in a pantomime! Then we broke up and dancing began. Tickets for this ball could be purchased for ten dollars, and among the many thousands present every grade of

society was represented—evening dress was not *de rigueur*. Most of the ladies' dresses were very gorgeous, not the least so being some that, I was told by one of the American officers, were worn by *devotees* of Aphrodite. Two bands provided the music, and the refreshments were beyond reproach, champagne to the masthead.

The naval parade was a great function. The British landed a contingent of a thousand men, when (so the New York paper stated), for the first time for more than a hundred years the British flag was carried through New York. We again had the post of honour and led the column. The Admirals and Captains attended at the City Hall to witness the march-past. Here the Governor, Mayor and Leading Officials were waiting to receive the salute. The route was packed with people, who were quite on good terms with themselves and us, for we were the recipients of many remarks, all of which were friendly. The New York police, who, by the way seem to be mostly Irish, seemed to know how to deal with a crowd, but in a different way from our usually suave and considerate Robert ; the former has a formidable-looking club that is very much in evidence. At the risk of being thought unduly patriotic I have again to mention that our men, by their bearing and marching, carried off the palm, especially the Marines, who, in their red coats, came in for unstinted applause. Bayly rode at the head, followed by a mid as A.D.C. Two mids carried the colours, and a goat, the pet of the *Tartar,* came next, the rear being brought up by a very useful and much-needed canteen-cart. The Russians were certainly the biggest men on the parade, but their equipment and style were inferior. Of the others, the Germans were very military, and as they passed they broke into the goose-step, whereupon the crowd burst into roars of laughter, much to the rage and disgust of the Huns, who could not understand how anyone dared to ridicule them. The Italians were quite smart in appearance and wore white spats. What a sight for an old sea-dog ! While all the rest marched four abreast and did their best. The Mayor entertained the chief officers at the Waldorf to lunch after the review, and we dined there the same evening with the Governor. At this dinner we heard some fine oratory. Among the speakers were such well-known men as Bishop Potter and Chauncey

Depew. Americans seem to make more of a study of the art than the average Britisher, some of whom seem to rely upon inspiration of the moment.

Another function was a trip to Chicago to visit the exhibition—all ranks were treated most hospitably, our kind hosts not allowing us to pay for anything. Indeed this was the universal and somewhat embarrassing custom whenever they knew that you were one of the guests of the country. Even the extortionate cabmen (and in New York there are some champions at the game) would modify the fare. I once offered a dollar less than the driver demanded. He looked at me, and then said, "Get in, I guess you belong to a friendly nation." That night, when I arrived at the ship, I was the spectator of a curious scene. The Russian flagship, *General Admiral*, lay astern of us, and the liberty men were going off, full of bad whisky. Some officers had been sent to hurry them up, and they did it with their drawn swords, pricking up the laggards most unmercifully, but numbers of them were so drunk that they had to be carried down and bundled into the boats; it was not a pretty sight, and would have been a grand illustration for Pussyfoot. I always found the Russian officers most well-bred and agreeable men.

While driving in the procession and passing one of the hotels, I saw a well-known English face, that of George Grossmith, with whom I had been acquainted for many years, an acquaintance that lasted until his death. We exchanged signs of greetings, but I had not time to hunt him up. I used to visit his house frequently in Manchester Square, and there met many interesting people; one in particular will be remembered by many, J. L. Toole, who always seemed to radiate happiness and mirth. The last time I saw him was in his revival of *Paul Pry*. I happened to say that I had never seen him in it and the next day there came an order for a box; he spotted us and brought in my wife's name among others that Paul Pry mentions. As for 'George' (as he was to all friends), he was the best of company, and many a cheerful hour has he supplied me with. I cannot quit Toole without narrating a story that is ascribed to him. Playing the title rôle in *Richard III*, he had just declaimed, "A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!" whereupon a wag called out from the gallery, "I say, Guv'nor, won't a donkey do?"

"Yes," replied Toole, "Come down." The hidden jest is that Johnnie was a Comedian pure and simple.

I seem to have got off the track a bit. The ships were thrown open to the public; the *Blake* became enormously popular, and even the little *Tartar* was visited by thousands. At one time the *Blake* was so crowded by a dense mass of humanity that people had to be cleared off the ship. In the *Tartar,* Cooper-Key told off men to show parties round, and he told me of a conversation he overheard. One of our men was explaining the mechanism of a 6-inch gun to a large party, and one man asked how far the gun would carry. Our man replied, "About eight miles," to which the American retorted, "We have some that will carry twelve." "Yes," drawled our man (who was a Cockney), "but you load your guns with gas." This sally was received with good humour and laughter. This Cockney was an amusing man. Another one said to him, "I saw a howl last night." To which he replied, "You mean you 'eard one."

British warships distributed about the docks trophies and articles as pretty-pretties, kept burnished up. Several of these were (to put it mildly) annexed by our visitors, presumably as souvenirs. After arriving at Bermuda the Captain of the *Blake* received a letter from an anxious father, saying that his daughter had 'obtained' a small shell from his ship, and it was still in her possession. Would he kindly let him know if there was any danger of its exploding!

Our friends of the *Oneida* and *Golden Rod* brought their yachts alongside on respective days; the former took us up the East River to see Hell Gate. We sat down to a lunch as we started that lasted almost until our return, and all we saw of Hell Gate was through the ports! On the other trip we went up the Hudson and past West Point, a long distance on this charming river, and we did not get back until 9 p.m.

Another object of interest was a tennis match at the Racquet Club between the two professionals, Standish and Pettitt, when the former won three games. It is not often one gets a chance of witnessing this fine game. We then went to Koster and Beales' music hall, and on other occasions to the Eden Musee, also to the Union Square and Broadway Theatres. At the former the Wilson Barrett Company was playing *Ben ma Chree,* while at the latter

de Wolf Hopper was playing the *Great Panjandrum*. The Admiral entertained Wilson Barrett and his company at lunch on board the *Blake*.

With the Admiral and party I went to Cramps' Yard at Philadelphia, where we saw the ill-fated *Maine* running her trials. The inevitable reporter asked me what I thought of her, and I diplomatically replied that I liked the look of her. The next day's papers had big head lines, "Commander Fleet says he admired the *Maine*, and the Admiral agreed with him." It is almost impossible to feel modest sometimes. At a dance on the *Australia* the Admiral came up to speak to me. I was sitting talking to my partner, but of course stood up and saluted. When the Admiral had gone one of the guests approached and said in a surprised tone, "Say, Captain, do you always treat your Admiral with that amount of respect?" J.O.H. was hospitality itself, and he dined all the foreign Admirals and Captains, asking us in turns to meet them. I had the bad luck to have a German next to me, and after abusing the New Yorkers for their insolence over the goose-step affair, he asked, "How is it you have a ship named *Magicienne* in your squadron?" A very fine French officer (a Breton) was sitting opposite; I noticed him paying attention. The remark was of course intended for him, for the Germans delight in making mischief. I determined to let him have it. "Well, you must know that our Navy is not a Navy of yesterday like yours. We have had some good fights with the French, and as we have one or two of their ships so they have one or two of ours." The Hun subsided and said no more. When we broke up the Frenchman made for me: "Ah! my friend, I heard what you said to that man. We of the French Navee and British Navee have fought together. We have our legends, our traditions and our honour. As for the Germans—Bah!" and he made a sweeping gesture with his hand that nearly struck the German in his face, for unobserved he had been standing behind him listening, and had heard every word.

My friend Motley lent me one of his horses and we rode to the tomb of General Ulysses Grant, a great yet plain man to whose memory his countrymen have appropriately raised a plain memorial. But our delightful time was drawing to an end, and as a finale the British ships entertained the American officers of the opposite line to dinner. I was ashore that night, but I was aware when

I came off that the 'Tartars' had done their guests proud, for that was the way that one of them put it to me, and I came in for the fag of an amusing evening. We also subscribed for and presented a silver cup with a suitable inscription to Admiral Gherardi. Finally, by special request, we illuminated our squadron again. On this occasion the river was literally packed with steamers of all sorts crammed with sightseers. Bands played and the trippers sang, one of their favourites being "My country 'tis of Thee," which is set to the tune of "God save the King," but they have adopted it, as they have a good many more of the airs made in England, and one does not know whether to be flattered or annoyed. Anyway, we wished they had left our national air alone, for at first we were always coming to 'Attention' under the belief that they were honouring us especially with it. We have no prerogative for this air, but it has been ours so long that if there is any truth in the adage that possession is nine points of the law, we ought not to have been disturbed in the use of it. The air is said to have been written by Lulli and the words of 'Dieu sauve St. Denis' set to it. It used to be sung as a serenade by the demoiselles of St. Cyr under the windows of Louis Quinze.

Our last night arrived, and we dined with the Sons of St. George at Delmonico's. It was a dinner worthy of the place. One of them told me that for the first time they had been allowed to hoist the British flag over the hotel during their annual dinner. The Americans were a little bigoted as regards our flag, and it was never allowed to be flown except on our Embassy and Consulates. Matters are better now, and I believe that we understand each other better. It used to amuse me when walking down Regent Street to note the number of American flags, most of the exhibitors being quite unaware that there was no reciprocity on the other side. But the greater number of the objectors in the States were people who had a real or fancied grievance against Great Britain. The mob, mostly Irish, gave an example of it quite lately, when it tried to haul down the British flag on the Union Club, a proceeding that was very properly resented by the members. The United States have a great future before them I am convinced. If they would stop the immigration and settle down, and so conform to type, they would become the most powerful

world factor to be reckoned with. As it is, the Anglo-Saxon race, that supplies the best class of American, is in the minority. However, that race is the dominant one, and it can, and does, mould the others to pattern, but the influx of the foreign element makes it an increasingly difficult task. The best American is of a very high type, and if it achieves mastery will contribute materially to the world's advancement and peace.

In the States they are very much like us, overburdened with speeches, and on the above occasions, even I had to make one, and when alluding to the generous hospitality we had received I instanced it by stating that the only expense I had incurred had been a six-dollar trip to Philadelphia. We broke up. Soon I felt a tap on my shoulder, and turning round met the smiling face of a complete stranger. "Captain," said he, "let me give you those six dollars." I had hard work to decline his kind offer.

Delmonico's and the Waldorf were the most popular restaurants at that time, and were always crowded. A story is told of the well-known author, R. H. Davis, in connection with one of them. It must be premised that R. H. D. had a fairly good opinion of himself; he certainly was some writer. Entering one of these places with two friends, he found every table engaged, but a party of three, noticing his position, hastily finished their liqueurs and made way. Davis addressed the man who appeared to be the leader, thanked him and said, "Perhaps you might like to know who it is that you have obliged. This is my friend Stephen Arnold, the author; this Robert Jameson, journalist, and I—well I am Richard Harding Davis." When the other had quite recovered he said, "Allow me to introduce *my* friends. This is Julius Cæsar, this Alexander the Great, and I—well I am Napoleon Bonaparte."

On the 10th May we left New York during the forenoon. It was an ebb tide, and we steamed up the river, then turned, and—the *Blake* leading—passed down the lines, bands playing and men cheering. We went out in close order, and kept up our end to the last. Having cleared the Hook, we shaped course for Bermuda. Just before clearing the Hook we were overhauled by a big liner, that cut in between us and the next ahead. It took us all we knew to avoid collision, which would have been attended with disastrous results. I made him a signal,

"I shall report you," to which he replied, "Thanks." Probably he thought I meant at Lloyd's.

On considering the account of this function I must emphasize what admirable and indefatigable hosts the Americans made. They had but one answer to our thanks, and that was, "You came here for a good time, and we are going to see that you get it." Indeed they *did*, and it has left an indelible feeling of friendship toward them in my mind. This hospitality is a national trait.

When we arrived at Bermuda we felt ready for a rest cure, but the end of May saw us starting for Barbadoes. My friend the Governor was still to the fore, and the Leicesters had been moved here from Halifax, but like poor Joe we were kept moving on, and visited Grenada, Cannouan, Tobago, St. Vincent, and finally paid our first visit to St. Lucia, where on June 23, 1893, we heard of the terrible *Victoria* disaster, which ship was rammed and sunk in the Mediterranean by the *Camperdown* with a loss of some hundreds of lives, including the Admiral, my old Captain, Sir George Tryon.

A detachment of the Leicesters was stationed on the Morne in some new barracks that had been built, and we got a warm welcome, as we did from the officers of the West Indian detachment near the town. The road up to the barracks winds among profuse tropical vegetation, with an easy grade, and from the plateau there is a fine view of the town of Castries and neighbourhood. Some millions were spent in making the harbour into a coaling station and fortifying it ; now I hear that the troops are withdrawn and the place reverting to jungle, as is always the case in the tropics when premises are neglected. There are millions of acres in the West Indies now jungle that were formerly prosperous sugar estates. Ruined houses and mills tell of vanished fortunes.

At Dominica we picked up Sir W. Haynes-Smith, who was on a visit of inspection with his private secretary, the Master of Elibank. As the son of a naval officer, the latter took very kindly to a ship. We took them back to St. John's, and then went round to English Harbour to lay up for a time. The entrance to the harbour is completely masked from the sea, and in the old days—when there were no charts—might easily have been passed by those not acquainted with it. The entrance is at the head of a narrow inlet, and takes a right-angled turn, broadening out into a small bay, sufficiently large

to accommodate several ships. Here the ships used to assemble in the hurricane months, and the usual oldest inhabitant told me that he could remember a dozen or more using it for the above reason. The havoc that these pests inflict is at times terrific, and in the hurricane of 1780, two line-of-battle ships, six frigates and five sloops were lost, in most cases with all hands.

I had heard much that interested me about this place, and I had long had a wish to visit it, which was now gratified. It was a typical 'Pirates' Lair,' and must have been a favourite resort until the Navy slipped in and cleared them off the seas. During the latter part of the eighteenth century the dockyard was constructed, the labour being provided by slaves from the neighbouring estates. There is no dry dock, but a jetty which ships used for careening, and we berthed the *Tartar* there. After the old wars its importance began to decline, and when we visited it there were only a caretaker and a few labourers. The Commissioners' House and other buildings were in good repair, and we cleared out the ship and took up our quarters in them, our object being to fumigate and clear out all rats and insects that had begun to get unpleasant. In this we were thoroughly successful. The dockyard covers about sixteen acres, and on the opposite side is a very comfortable house, known as Clarence House, that was built for William IV when he was in command of a ship on the station. It cost £24,000, and is provided with hurricane-proof cellars. The house was always at the disposal of the senior officer, but the Governor insisted upon my staying with him. Of course it is haunted, but by what or by whom I know not, but there were mysterious and weird noises about it after dark.

Just outside the yard was a huge rain slide that served a tank for the supply of ships in the past; now it was falling into decay. It was covered with names and dates, some of them being cut at the commencement of the eighteenth century. The naval hospital had been allowed to fall into ruin. The neighbourhood must have been very populous once, for the remains of the town showed it, and the surrounding heights fairly bristled with forts, barracks and storehouses. All these buildings were decaying, and the guns had been sold to an enterprising Yankee.

The planters and the Army and Navy no doubt kept the ball rolling. Now only a few negro fishermen and

labourers live among the ruins, and there was not a white man within five miles. At that distance there is a little church, at Falmouth, and in the churchyard repose the bodies of many of our countrymen. On one of the monuments I found the name of a Commander, the Hon. James Charles Pitt (a son of the great Earl of Chatham), who, as the inscription informed us, "Was cut off before attaining the meridian of a fame that his early deeds bid fair to Promise." He was only twenty years of age, and commanded the *Dolphin*, a sloop. Promotion was rapid then!

This little church was the scene of a curious incident. The Commander of a ship arrived at it to be married to a lady of the island. At the church door a note was put into his hand; he read it, turned round and went off to his ship. The marriage never took place. It was generally supposed that he had a wife already, of which fact somebody had become aware, hence the warning note.

A Sundial in the yard marks the spot of a tragedy. Lord Camelford, Commander of a sloop, ordered a Lieutenant to take his ship outside for patrol duty. The Lieutenant refused on the ground that although his Captain was on leave, he was still the senior ship. Camelford met him in the dockyard, and upon his reiterated refusal, drew a pistol and killed him on the spot. For this he was brought to a court martial that acquitted him on account of the exigencies of the Service during war-time. Camelford was afterwards killed in a duel in London, it is said by a brother of his victim. Some time before our visit an enormous number of papers were discovered, and among them were several with Nelson's signature. One of the papers brought to light concerned an affair in which an officer ordered his boat's crew to tar and feather his washerwoman. This little jest is also attributed to Camelford. English Harbour has probably sheltered such worthies as Teach, Avery, Rackham, and possibly the women Mary Read and Anne Bonny. These ruffians succeeded the more humane, though equally unscrupulous, Buccaneers, who made use of Tortuga and who disappeared after the treaty of Utrecht, whereas piracy existed in these waters until the close of the eighteenth century.

My visit to Government House, distant from English Harbour fourteen miles, was a long one, and rendered additionally pleasant by the presence of Lady Haynes-

Smith and her daughter. The A.D.C. drove over to fetch me in a vehicle with a rumble to it, in which my baggage was stowed. At an unusally bad place a heavy bump, followed by a loud crash, betokened disaster. One of the black boys on the box shouted, "De rumble am gone, Sah." It had parted company under the heavy strain. I rode with Miss Haynes-Smith nearly every day, and riding in the tropics (and elsewhere) is the best form of exercise. The Governor was a progressive man, and had the interests of the island at heart. Many improvements were due to him, not the least being the construction of a reservoir that was badly needed. He was a hospitable man, and gave periodical balls to which everybody—with any pretensions to being in society—was invited. Staying in the house meant having a reserved seat for the ceremony, for the arrivals were all presented to His Excellency by the A.D.C., and as a guest I formed part of his entourage. The amusement consisted in the solemnity of the guests and in their clothes—although Carlyle *does* say that they don't matter, or words to that effect—evening suits of a former generation and evening dresses that were not exactly modelled on Parisian lines. Of course this did not apply to all hands, for there were Belles and Beaux quite in the latest fashion.

Here one morning, while slumbering peacefully, I was roused by my bed shaking and cantering. At first I thought some one was underneath and playing a joke on me ; then it flashed upon me that it was an earthquake, and hopping out I seized some necessary garments and made tracks for the door. By the time I had reached it the shock was over. This was my second experience, the former being in Jamaica. One morning, while staying with some friends, I came down to find the dining-room ceiling resting on the floor!

One of our periodical French scares now occurred, and we hurried off to St. Lucia to join the *Tourmaline*. It passed, and we left for Port Royal. The Admiral had commissioned me to buy a pony for him ; they bred capital ponies there, and still do so. With the aid of the Inspector-General of Constabulary, Peel, who was an old friend of mine from the days when he was a subaltern in the Royal Regiment, I purchased a thoroughly good animal, and we embarked him at Kingston, leaving for Bermuda after shipping him. Mention of Peel reminds me that one night we were dining with the West Indian

Regiment at Up Park Camp, Kingston, and he made a wager with a Planter named Hamilton (the stake was £100) that the latter would not walk up to the summit of the John Crow Mountain and back in twenty-four hours. Hamilton, who was an athlete, accomplished this feat, much to our astonishment. Those who know the mountain will appreciate the sporting nature of the affair.

After clearing Jamaica we were perturbed by the uncommon phenomenon of a Sundog ; the Sun, clearly visible through a thick mist, was surrounded by an immense halo. Such an occurrence at that time of the year was a bad portent, but nothing happened for three days. Dame Nature was meanwhile stoking up, and then she blew the lid off! We had passed through Turks' Island Passage, and had made an offing of about a hundred miles, when the barometer began to fall, continuing to do so. We made up our minds that we were in for it. By this time the wind was blowing with the force of a gale from the North, with a heavy sea from the East. It was evident that as the centre of the hurricane was coming straight for us, and as we were making no headway, it was time to get. We steamed to the Southward for forty miles, making preparations meanwhile for the coming struggle, and then lay to, which proved to be a pretty tough proposition. One experience of it was quite enough for any of us. While running we were badly pooped, and lost three boats. The force of the wind was now one terrific continuous roar, and the seas were what writers term mountainous, so that must be good enough for me too. This lasted for thirty-two hours, and the only people that scored were the men ; there was nothing to be done, so we let them stay in their hammocks. I spent the whole time on deck, and when I went to my cabin found it a perfect wreck. Clothes, books, and shattered pictures strewed the deck. The little craft behaved admirably, but (except when forced on her beam ends) rolled and pitched in an extremely uncomfortable manner. During the height of the hurricane we used oil bags with marked success. Heavy seas had been breaking on board, but from that time we were free of them. The driving clouds were so low that we were permanently enveloped in a thick mist, accompanied by torrential rain, all these conditions being most depressing. Add to all this the difficulty of getting anything to eat or drink, and I think my readers will take my advice, namely, 'Avoid Hurricanes.'

Among other preparation we slung the pony in the horse-box, which saved him from broken legs, but he got a terrible doing, and when the weather cleared and we resumed our course he looked done; his head hung down, and his eyes were glazed. We bedded down all the hay, lifted him out, and gave him two bottles of stout, which he lapped up as if it was his usual drink. After lying down for half an hour, to our intense surprise and relief he got up and began to eat his bed! But the poor beast had no less than seventeen chafes on him. Three days later we arrived at Bermuda, and I made a signal for a lighter to land a pony. The reply was that it was after hours, and we must wait until the morning. My answer was that it was the Admiral's pony. This promptly produced a lighter. He celebrated his return to terra firma by flinging up his heels and careering round the dockyard, whinnying and neighing. "No more hurricanes for Me." The next ship brought him up, perfectly recovered, and as fit as a fiddle. There he won a lot of races with Sandeman, the Flag-Lieutenant, up.

At Bermuda I found my family and a note from the Admiral that I might take them up to Halifax. This was another example of his thoughtfulness, for the only steamers between the two places were two wretched old craft that ran at uncertain times, and were alive with cockroaches.

This time we deserted the 'Waverley' for the 'Clairmont,' the latter being close to the dockyard, and it was occupied almost entirely by Service people. A regular case of birds of a feather! The only objection I had to it was the telephone outside our room, that seemed to be going night and day. Fires at Halifax were pretty frequent—most of the houses are built of wood—and one night, in response to repeated calls, I had to turn out, and all I got was an inquiry where the fire was. Somewhat irritated, I replied, "In the kitchen Grate," and rang off. I should have been wise to have disconnected, for the operator gave me time to go to sleep again and then rung up once more. Again I turned out to be greeted with a suave voice that said, "I thought you would like to know where the fire really is; it is in John Street." This time I *did* disconnect.

Two happy months, and the usual Southerly move began. We left for Bermuda, and I had my passengers on board again. On arrival the Admiral sent his barge

for us, and put us up at Admiralty House, for he had found out that some one else had jumped our claim at Boaz Island and we were houseless. He kept us until we found another *pied-à-terre* at Hamilton, where we took an empty house in Cedar Avenue, hired what furniture was absolutely necessary, and extemporized the rest, using empty boxes and baths and such-like truck. Covered with rugs and spreads, it all looked quite respectable if not permanent, and we christened it 'Our Flat' in remembrance of a comedy of that name. I had just time to install the family before leaving again for Antigua, making for English Harbour again, where we remained for a few days. The Governor was away, but we were cheered by a visit from the Master, who drove over with a Catholic priest, Father Fogerty, who was most popular with the 'Tartars.' He was a fine type of Irishman, but in my opinion was more fitted to be a soldier or a sailor; he found himself a priest and made the best of it. Like most of his countrymen, he was a good judge of a horse, and always had a good one in his stable. He was also a judge of cocktails, and his excellent housekeeper, a buxom quadroon girl, was an adept at mixing them.

During our previous visit we had noted the quality of the dockyard bell. We arrived at the conclusion that it was wasting its sweetness on unappreciative ears, and that it might be put to a better purpose than summoning children of the negro race to school. When we left the place, by some extraordinary juggling trick, the bell was on board the *Tartar* and ours was hanging in its place. On examination we found that it bore the inscription 'Ceres' and the date 1794. It had been captured in a Spanish frigate, and owed the sweetness of its tone to a strong alloy of silver. Anyway, the spirit of the bell must have found itself in more congenial surroundings on board a warship. Of course I knew nothing about it until the nefarious deed had been committed and we had left the harbour. But the inhabitants of the place memorialized the Governor, and when we visited St. John's I had to promise His Excellency that it should be restored the next time we visited English Harbour. It was long odds against our going there again, and I took care to warn my successor of the penalty of visiting that place.

Thence to Barbadoes, where we found the German frigate *Stein*. I dined with the Leicesters, and some of

these men were guests. The individual next to me got quite drunk and an intolerable nuisance ; presently he got up and staggered out, coming back after an interval, much to our disgust, for I hoped we had got rid of him. I discovered that he had behaved as we are told the ancient Romans did at their banquets. A fine example of German Kultur!

I had long wished to visit Martinique, so left for Fort Royal, where their dockyard is situated. We found the town had been ruined by a hurricane and a subsequent fire, but that it was being rebuilt by the enterprising French. We left for St. Pierre. This town was thoroughly French, and some of us went on shore to sample the cuisine as a change. After calling on the Consul we went off to the leading hotel, and with the intelligent and sympathetic proprietor elaborated a most fetching menu. All arrangements being completed, we were about to sally forth for a further inspection, when the Consul's boy arrived with a telegram for me that conveyed orders from the Admiral to proceed to St. Thomas and render assistance to a mail steamer on shore. Our gastronomic dreams were rudely shattered, our epicurean ambitions dissolved, and in an hour's time we were steaming out of the harbour.

As we steamed away from this engaging town none of us foresaw the terrible doom in store for it. High overhead the picturesque peak of Mont Pelée towered, and on its western slopes, washed by the sea and bathed in the sun, the town spread itself out peacefully. Early in May, 1902, the imprisoned forces of the volcano began to stoke up, and steam and smoke issued from its peak, but lulled to security by long immunity, the people took no heed. Suddenly the overweighted valve blew off and took the greater part of the peak with it, and a volume of poisonous gas, accompanied by red-hot cinders and lava, poured out and downward, enveloping the entire town. In a few minutes the whole of the population had ceased to exist and the town was blotted out. A British steamer, the *Roddam*, that had just anchored, managed to crawl out with the loss of some lives and carry the news of this appalling disaster.

On arrival at St. Thomas we found the S.S. *Eden* badly on shore on Buck Island, just outside the harbour. How she could get there nobody could imagine except the Captain who was in charge at the time. Apparently

he thought she was fitted to make an overland trip. There were too many rocks through her bottom, and the job was beyond us, so I advised the Captain to telegraph to the owners to send out a proper salvage vessel.

Before leaving we went into harbour, which used to be used as a sort of Clapham Junction by the ocean steamers, and whence passengers were distributed to the island boats. Although a Danish island, the language in use was English.

A very annoying incident occurred on the evening of our arrival. Cooper-Key and myself were dining with the Governor, and as the ship had been coaling all day, to save the men we used the skiff dinghy, a useful little boat pulled by two boys. We had only gone about three hundred yards before we became painfully aware of the fact that the *Nixe's* steam launch, steaming without lights, was bearing down upon us. We shouted to attract her attention, but all in vain, and she drove right over us. We were in about thirty fathoms of water, and there were plenty of sharks in the harbour. However, the boat backed and picked us up. Finding that the coxswain understood English, I gave him the rough side of my tongue, and told him to go and report it to his officer, and tell him that it was the most incredibly lubberly performance imaginable. The *Tartar* had heard the crash, and a whaler promptly arrived, to which we transferred. When we arrived on board and explained matters, it would have done the Germans good to hear what was said of them. While we were getting out of our wet clothes a cutter arrived from the *Nixe* with an apologetic officer. In the meantime I had despatched an officer to the Governor with explanations, and in reply got a message from him that he would be glad if I would come up later. Accordingly we landed and found when I got there everyone wanted to know whose boat it was that had caused the accident. I whispered to a Dane, "It was not a Danish Boat." This was passed round among them, and it was easy to see how relieved they were. Later the German Captain joined me, and by way of being polite I said that I hoped he would not punish the man too severely, thinking that he would say that he would let him off being shot or something of that sort, but he only shrugged his shoulders and said, "So I shall not punish him."

After this we returned to Bermuda and had another

spell at Hamilton, where we spent Christmas, 1893, and then left with the squadron for the winter cruise. The usual routine of the cruises was followed—visits to all the British islands, finishing with Trinidad, whence we went to Port Royal. At all the places (but we did not know it) we were paying our farewell visit, for we never came South again.

At Trinidad the Master joined us as my guest, and remained until we were ordered off from Jamaica. We then transferred him to the *Partridge*, the Captain of which, Macalister (known as the MacPartridge), was one of the best. During our stay at Kingston the Master and I did the sights thoroughly. We parted with him with unfeigned regret, and in after-years I frequently met him with pleasure. Although I did not agree with him politically, his advancement was no surprise to me. I always felt that he would succeed, and sincerely regretted his premature death.

We were ordered to Cartagena, and we found it worth a visit. Formerly one of the chief ports of Colombia, it had been displaced by Sabanilla farther to the Eastward, but nothing can deprive it of interest. This old Spanish town, surrounded by walls of extraordinary thickness, must have been impregnable from the land side under past conditions of warfare, and almost so from the sea, as Admiral Vernon found to his cost when he, with General Wentworth, attacked it in 1741. The city is to a great extent surrounded by water, and on account of rocks and surf is unapproachable from the sea side. The entrance to the harbour is through the Boca Chica, about six miles to the Westward. Steaming through this, past the old forts, and threading our way through innumerable islands, we came into the inner harbour and anchored in security. The Vice-Consul came off and took some of us for a drive with him. All the guns had disappeared, and the fine buildings were mostly decaying. There was no sign of business activity. Walking on the walls and looking into the town, it looked like a city of the dead.

A short run took us to Sabanilla, the harbour that has supplanted Cartagena. We took the train up to Barranquilla, a horribly sandy place, and very interesting. This town, in the province of Bolivar, named after the great Liberator, does not seem to have inherited his energetic character. Perhaps, as it is only in its youth, it may materialize, for Colombia is one of the most richly

minerally endowed parts of the world. As a set-off the climate is very much on the hot side.

Thence we started off for Santa Marta to the Eastward. This is the harbour that Kingsley has immortalized in *Westward Ho!* When anchored in the little bay, and while smoking a meditative cigar after dinner on the poop under the brilliant moon and stars, it was not hard to picture Amyas Legh (gallant son of Devon), with his trusty follower, Salvation Yeo, swimming noiselessly off to the great galleon *City of the Cross*, swords in their mouths, and determination in their souls. In the background towered the dark and forbidding outlines of the Sierra de Perija, whence the Bishop of Cartagena—with some expenditure of slaves—procured the snow to cool his wine. Well, he had that luxury up to the end. But once on shore the romance faded, and the stern reality of sand and heat made one feel less romantic.

The town is laid out on the block system. Several of the old Spanish buildings are still in use, and the modern ones are pretty and artistically arranged, all of them washed in light colours. It is lavishly lit with electric light. The country round is full of bird life; it was the first place where I saw wild canaries. The Consul gave me two fine macaws that I took to Halifax and presented to Lady Hopkins, and a Spanish Señora gave me a very handsome yellow and black bird, not unlike a Mynah.

From Santa Marta we went to Hayti, calling at the island of Navassa on the way. This island is quite a small one off Cap Trois, and has been a valuable asset on account of its phosphate. It was worked by an American firm, and there were rumours of a tragedy, and my going there was rather as an amateur sleuth. It is little more than a huge rock, and rises steeply from the sea on all sides. It can only be boarded at one place, and that only when wind and sea permit, and I was hoisted out of my boat in a large iron bucket worked by a steam crane. The two white men who were in charge of the works, and who had 143 labourers under them, met me and took me round. They told me that their predecessors had put down a mutiny of the workers with rifles and revolvers, and had killed several. As these people were all American citizens in a Haytian island, we had no status. I strongly suspected that the two men speaking to me had been the chief performers

in this affair, but I did not press the point. The labourers were a most villainous-looking crowd, and looked ripe for another explosion, but they had no arms, and the foremen professed themselves quite able to deal with them. I noticed that they were well heeled.

At Hayti Tweedie came off and carried me off to his house, where we spent a cool night, and after breakfast we drove in and I took another look at the Cathedral. The pale-faced Nuns were still there. I imagine they almost lived in the comparatively cool Cathedral, and the black Madonna and Mulatto Child still hung on the wall. Then Northward Ho, and in a couple of days we passed out of the tropics and bade adieu to its fascinations and heat for the last time.

In a few days we were back at Hamilton again. The King's Regiment had gone to Halifax, and the Royal Berkshire had taken its place. We got on very well with this fine regiment, and I occasionally meet some of them now, but alas! the number is reduced. During this visit I saw the most perfect waterspout. It travelled from North to South across the island, and was of great diameter and height. It must have contained millions of tons of water. The ship was now ordered to be got ready for a trip to Boston, U.S.A., in attendance on the *Blake*. This gave us much satisfaction.

We had now to give up 'Our Flat,' and left it with regret after many happy days in it. It seemed hard to leave just as it was looking its best. The lilies were superb, especially the Red Canna, but anything will grow in this fortunate island. I hear that no motor-cars are allowed, and it is to be hoped they never will be, for they would make the place unbearable; a motor-boat is the proper method of travel about the islands.

Captain J. Carr, the head of the dockyard, took in the family for the few remaining days. This kind-hearted hospitable man was a round peg in a round hole. All his friends will remember his butler, who had been with him many years, and always spoke of 'Us' and 'We,' so thoroughly did he identify himself with his master. He had been with Carr in his married days, and when discussing the late Mrs. Carr with me he said with great feeling, "The Captain was very much attached to her, Sir; I don't think *we* shall ever marry again!"

Carr, the most courteous squire of dames, was escorting a lady to see her husband off. She was very fond of her husband, who shared a good deal of her affection with a dachshund that belonged to her. The husband could not take the wife, but to save trouble he obediently carried off the dog. They parted, and like black-eyed Susan on the shore, she stood and gazed and gazed the more. Carr waited patiently and becomingly. "Ah!" she cried, "he's looking at me, he's still looking at me." Carr politely acquiesced, thinking it was no more than a good husband ought to do. "Now!" she exclaimed, "he's wagging his tail!" When Carr recovered he realized that it was the dog and not the man that she had been alluding to all the time.

The Admiral had asked my wife whether she would prefer to go to Boston in the *Blake* or *Tartar*, which was the first intimation that we had that she was going. Of course she was not going to inflict herself on him while she had a husband available, and just before we sailed she came off with the boy and nurse. We arrived at Boston on the 23rd of May, 1894, and proceeded up harbour amid a scene of great enthusiasm. The syrens hooted and the trippers sang, apparently hymns of welcome. We put up at the 'Brunswick,' where American prices made an English sovereign go about as far as two or three dollars.

Boston was full of interest for us; the English of the Bostonians is pure and without accent. The Americans have a saying, "Boston for culture, New York for money, and Washington for family." Certainly all the Bostonians that we came in contact with were charming, and there is a great air of culture about the city. A great object of interest to me was the old city hall that dated from the time of the British, and had still the Royal Arms on it. An act of great tolerance when we recall that Boston was the *fons et origo* of the revolution. Neither did they buck about the battle of Bunker's Hill (which hill, of course, we were taken to see), and perhaps they are right, for our people ought never to have taken it, and only succeeded at the third attempt. This occurred in June, 1775, and the same month of 1814 witnessed the duel between the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake*, fought off the mouth of the harbour, and witnessed by many thousands of people who lined the heights. The latter ship, although nominally a match for the former, owed her defeat to

the superior gunfire and discipline that had been inculcated by Captain Broke.

We trammed out to Harvard and admired the buildings both outside and in. The University more than realized our expectations, and only lacked antiquity to complete the charm. But what are a few hundred years!

The Navy yard drew us naturally, and we discovered many kindred spirits, and got a hearty welcome. In the yard we were shown the *Vesuvius*, a craft that discharged a dynamite bomb. I don't think it had been quite a success. The officer who showed it to us seemed rather ashamed of such a method of warfare, and said that he did not think it was fair fighting, with which we agreed. Thanks to the Hun, we have all learnt that anything that will destroy an adversary, whether by fair means or foul, is allowable. The Mayor, according to custom, entertained us, and we were treated to much oratory, some of it of a high order. On this occasion, much to my relief, I was not called upon to orate, and when we broke up I said as much to the Mayor. He evidently thought I had a grievance, for he said, "I'll call them all back." I hurriedly explained, and stopped him doing so.

We left Boston with regret. The people and the city had impressed all of us, and they had given us a whole-hearted welcome. Our exit was similar to our entry, and accompanied with even more waving and cheering. These visits between the Americans and ourselves should take place oftener; they promote good relations.

We put into Bar Harbour, the great summer resort of rich Americans. As it was the month of May, they had not arrived, so we had the place almost entirely to ourselves. The absence of visitors enhanced the charm and added to our enjoyment of the neighbourhood. The beautiful and imposing houses standing empty in well-kept grounds gave us an impression of a fashionable and bustling throng during the season.

A short run to St. John's, New Brunswick, and we were among the homes of the loyal colonists who retreated there during the revolution. Here we were among our own people again, and of course the principal function was a cricket match; fortune declared against us. The town is close to the mouth of the river of the same name, that flows into the Bay of Fundy. The rise and fall of

the tide here is phenomenal, and averages sixty feet. Just above the town the river is crossed by a bridge, and it is shallow underneath ; the consequence is that owing to this remarkable rise and fall there is a waterfall to the East on the ebb tide and one to the West on flood tide. I imagine this is a unique phenomenon. After another brief season of entertainment we returned to Halifax. St. John's is an attractive and progressive town judging by what we saw of it, and when we reflected that most of the residents were descendants of people who had testified their loyalty to the old country, at, in many instances, great personal loss, we at once felt a kindly sentiment toward them. During our stay my wife and I put up at the Royal Hotel, another familiar symbol.

It being the fishing season, I took a hand at it under the guidance of Alderson, an adept at the gentle art. The lakes near Halifax are full of trout, but the pest of flies was unendurable, and robbed one of all enjoyment. There was a good deal of polo played, and it is always a good game to watch. A very enjoyable factor was the open-air concerts in the public gardens at night. Some of the best singers of Canada and the States were engaged, and on a fine night with the good orchestra provided a first-class entertainment. About this time the new Governor-General, Lord Aberdeen, with Lady Aberdeen, arrived in succession to Lord and Lady Derby. The latter had achieved universal popularity, so that the former started with a heavy handicap.

To wind up we gave an At Home on board the *Tartar*, and after taking the ship outside to give a display of running torpedoes, we steamed into Bedford Basin and anchored for the most important part of the show, refreshment for the inner man and woman. I think the 'Tartars' did their guests well ; if we believed what they said to us on departure we did.

On August 8th we started with a squadron for Quebec, on what proved to be our last cruise. We arrived at Quebec and moored in two lines, *Blake*, *Canada*, *Tourmaline*, *Magicienne*, *Tartar*, and *Partridge*. As it was our last visit, I went round the old spots again, and paid farewell visits to the Falls of Montmorency, Plains of Abraham, and the battlements. The Admiral had promised the people of Montreal that he would bring some ships there, but the *Blake* drew too much water to get up.

He selected the *Tartar* to take him, and sent the other four in advance. Accordingly the next morning we started, having proudly hoisted the Admiral's flag, and that evening picked up the others just below Montreal, and we then led the procession ; it was a gratifying moment. The little ship did the passage in fine style, steaming over fifteen knots all the way. With the Admiral were Lady Hopkins, Miss Hopkins, and his Staff. I have in my smoking-room a souvenir of this trip in the form of a handsome water-colour of the *Tartar* (Vice-Admiral's flag at the fore), sent me later by J. O. H. I need scarcely say it is one of my valued mementoes.

We landed a brigade of seamen and marines, an unusual spectacle to the Montrealians, and one that was greatly enjoyed. During this visit the 'Tartars' were able to render valuable assistance at a fire, and to show appreciation the Mayor (who rejoiced in the historic name of Villeneuve) and Council voted a sum of money as an honorarium. By the unanimous wish of the men it was expended on a large photographic group of officers and men, then framed and presented to the Council, who ordered it to be hung in the council-room with a suitable inscription. This action was quite in keeping with the excellent spirit of the ship's company. An ancient member of the Town Council, who was present when King Edward visited Montreal as Prince of Wales, told me a story of that time. The Mayor (perhaps with an eye to business) showed the Prince a gold watch, saying, "When your Royal Highness' brother visited Montreal he gave me this watch." The Prince looked at it, and then remarked, "Did he! He never gave *me* one."

While at Montreal our orders for paying off arrived, to recommission at Bermuda, so on quitting Montreal we only spent one night at Quebec, and I enjoyed a farewell *tête-à-tête* dinner with the Admiral. When I said good-bye to him it was with real sorrow, not only at leaving the command, but also at parting with a man who had been a true friend to me. The next morning, when we weighed and left the squadron, we were sped by farewell cheers from the ships and the strains of 'Auld Lang Syne' from the flagship. After we had passed the flagship a farewell signal was made to us, "The *Tartar* is looking very nice as usual." It was our farewell pat on the back.

We arrived at Halifax on August 31st, and remained

for five days, a crowded time of farewells. The King's gave us a farewell dinner, and after I had arrived home and turned in, my wife and I were serenaded (about 3 a.m.) by a party of the King's and 'Tartars.' Finally I had to turn out and quaff a farewell beaker of champagne ; not until then would these good fellows depart. The whole proceedings amused my wife very much, but I don't know what the other inhabitants of the 'Clairmont' thought of it. I didn't ask them.

My wife, boy, and nurse booked in the S.S. *Damara*, and I had the satisfaction of knowing that they would be home to welcome me. We found Bermuda in its usual place, and at once went into the Camber and began preparations for paying off. Captain Carr had gone home, having been relieved by Brackenbury, generally known as Toby, an equally good fellow though of quite a different type. He was very musical, and had trained a party to play hand-bells. I believe he did this in every ship that he commanded. He sang Spanish songs (a language that he spoke very well) to his own accompaniment. He was a delightful companion, very excitable, and when in that state still more amusing.

The first mail from Halifax brought me a letter from the Admiral, of which I give an excerpt, with a hope that my readers will pardon my conceit in doing so. After saying that he had ordered the *Tartar* to be ready after Christmas, he goes on to say, "Alas, without her present lot, and I can't say how much I shall miss you and your cheery face and 'Ready, aye, Ready' mind. I felt quite low when you passed *Blake* and vanished into open space, and all that 'Jeff' [here he refers to Admiral Hornby] says of 'Comradeship' in a squadron was uppermost in my mind. It is some satisfaction to have had you with me for two and a half years out of my three, and now that my time is running short I can better afford to part with one whose epitaph should run when he left the station, 'He played the Game.'"

It had been an honour and a pleasure to serve under this man, and the crown was set on my service by the receipt of the above. But had it not been for my officers and men the *Tartar* could not have achieved such a success. Led by the First-Lieutenant, Cooper-Key, the ship's company became a human and not a mechanical machine. He was possessed of great tact and ability, and very soon earned the esteem of the men. I could

not have selected better officers than the Admiralty sent me, and I parted from all of them with genuine sorrow and met them in after-life with gladness.

In a month's time the ship that was to take the crew home arrived. It was the *Tyne*, and as I was senior to the Captain, I had to go home by my lonesome in a mail steamer via New York. On October 25th we paid off, the ceremony being performed by Toby, who made us a typical speech of commendation. The 27th of October, 1894, saw the *Tyne* take away my friends and comrades, Moubray taking our dog Tartar home for me. I watched them with a sad heart until I could no longer distinguish their faces. The next morning I embarked in the S.S. *Trinidad* for New York.

On arrival at New York, after transferring my baggage to the *Majestic*, I called on the Captain and found him at tea, the well-known Dean Hole being with him, so I had some interesting conversation. I then went off to the racquet club, and found James Motley, with whom I dined. The *Majestic* was at that time the crack liner ; she belonged to the White Star Line, and the following morning the manager, Maitland Kersey, came on board, and sending for the chief steward ordered him to give me a cabin to myself, to wait on me every day, and take my orders for dinner. My table companions, finding this out, elected me mess president. I think they had no reason to complain of my catering.

We made a good passage in spite of the fact that she had lost a blade of the starboard propeller, averaging over nineteen knots, good going for those days. I won one of the ' Daily-Run ' lotteries, which cleared my casual expenses, for they were worth having, and we arrived at Liverpool at 8.30 a.m. on November 7th, and by 5 p.m. the following day I was in Worthing, where my wife had gone to be with her brother.

Thus terminated one of the happiest periods of my Service life, during which the ship travelled 44,728 miles and visited sixty-five places.

A Commander-in-Command has just enough responsibility and not too much ; that comes later ; but the chief factors of my happiness were the character of the Commander-in-Chief and the loyalty of my officers. My brother Captains were indeed so, not only in name, and I take the opportunity of paying tribute to one in particular, the Honourable Assheton Gore Curzon-Howe, Captain of

the *Cleopatra*. Beloved by all who knew him, he was a man who spent his life in doing kind and thoughtful actions for others. A fine officer, his comparatively early death deeply affected all who knew him, and their heart-felt sympathy went out to his equally popular wife, Lady Curzon-Howe, in her grievous trial.

OLIM MEMINISSE JUVABIT.

CHAPTER XVI

H.M.S. *MAGDALA*

We envy not the warmer clime that lies
In ten degrees of more indulgent skies.

THE first thing to be done on arrival home after a long absence is to renew one's kit. With the men it is always 'I must get some clothes,' and with the women, 'I haven't got a thing to wear.' I imagine this is the experience of most of us. So we very soon found ourselves in London. It is rather humiliating to discover how little one has been missed, except by the particular little circle of friends and relations to which you belong. I went to my club. "Any letters?" I inquired of the same hall porter. He looked. "None, Sir," and then added, as a sort of afterthought, "You've been away lately I think, Sir?" "About three years," I replied, feeling that anyway I had been remembered. After lunch in the smoking-room, when ordering an old brandy with my coffee, the waiter said, "The same you always have, Sir?" This was almost more gratifying.

After a spell in Town we took a small house at Blackheath, not far from the Naval College. Before leaving London we experienced the bitter winter of 1894-95, that lasted some weeks. On this occasion we were not quite in agreement with Addison's pronouncement at the head of this chapter. While in Town I dined in the Tower with an officer of the Grenadier Battalion stationed there. It was an enjoyable and interesting experience, for it was ended somewhat abruptly at ten o'clock by the arrival of Beefeaters and Warders, who escorted the guests to the main gate in obedience to orders that all strangers must quit at that hour. I have sometimes longed for a similar regulation by which one could get rid of wearisome guests. My host was one of the

gallant band that fell upholding so gloriously the honour of their country and their regiment during the retreat from Mons. That story makes one's heart swell with pride that we are entitled to call such men our fellow-countrymen. Truly they deserve the title of heroes, which lately has been so lavishly and mistakenly bestowed upon shining lights of the football field and cinema screen. Not long ago one of the daily papers informed us that a certain lady was going to uphold the 'Honour' of England at lawn tennis. Surely the 'Credit' of England is a better word to use. It is rather saddening to discover that in the minds of the multitude the 'Honour' of the country depends upon supremacy in games. I maintain that the 'Honour' of the country consists—as it used to—in something higher and nobler. An Englishman's word used to be his bond. Is it so now? Surely a country's 'Honour' depends upon her acting in good faith, in keeping her word, and in the probity of her mercantile transactions.

On January 1, 1895, my promotion to Captain was gazetted; another spell of half-pay! At Blackheath we found a lot of old friends, and one of my old C.-in-C.'s, Sir Walter Hunt-Grubbe, as Admiral at the College.

The Heath itself had a bad reputation after dark. When we lived there formerly it was considered dangerous, for the terrible series of crimes committed by 'Jack the Ripper' were then being perpetrated, and many people believed that he lived in Blackheath. His victims were invariably women of the unfortunate class, and it was evident that he was a homicidal maniac with a grudge against such people. He was never caught, although it was sometimes stated that he had been and was confined in Broadmoor. A lady calling on us at this time remained rather late, and on starting found that it had become dark; she had to cross the Heath. As she was hesitating, a cab with a fare passed; she seized the opportunity and the back rail of the cab, and ran behind it until she reached the lights of the village and safety.

A brother officer was walking home across the Heath. A man came out of the bushes and asked what the time was. This is an old dodge, and my friend was up to it. "Just struck One," he replied, and he knocked him down and ran for it. Looking back, he saw another man emerging from the bushes.

I took full advantage of the Navy Club dinners, where

one met so many brother officers. At one of them, presided over by a distinguished Admiral, he proposed the toast of 'Absent Members,' remarking that what he liked so much about the Club was that "One met old friends that one had never seen before." This bull brought down the house. We knew what he meant, for undoubtedly the chief charm of these reunions is meeting men that you have known and liked and only see rarely.

This period of half-pay was further enlivened by private theatricals that took place in the Theatre of the Greenwich Hospital School. Here we played *Uncle*, and later on the well-known *Our Boys*, both by Byron, when I made my final appearance as Perkin Middlewick, the old Butter Man. We had a very good cast for both pieces, and an indulgent audience, so they both went off well. After this I confined my energies to stage management, recitations and songs.

In November, 1896, I was offered command of the *Magdala* at Bombay, and on January 15, 1897, my wife and I sailed from Tilbury in the S.S. *Arcadia*, the alloy to our happiness being that we had to leave our boy behind.

Before leaving we let our little house furnished. The agent was much interested in some valuable miniatures. He persuaded me to insure them for £100. We stored such things and other valuables in a reserved room and locked it up. Soon after our arrival I got a letter from him saying that the house had been burgled, and the miniatures, a collection of coins and some foreign postage stamps stolen. Moral—never employ a house agent who is a Virtuoso. After a day at Gib we arrived at Malta, and found my old Chief, J. O. H. (now C.-in-C. in the Mediterranean), and had time for a good long yarn. I took my wife ashore at Port Said, which place had improved, and transhipping at Aden into the *Shannon* we reached Bombay on February 6, 1897.

My command was a very good one. It was known as the 'Indian Defence,' and consisted of the Turret Ship *Magdala* in commission with the *Abyssinia*, another turret ship ; in reserve, two torpedo gunboats, the *Assaye* and *Plassy*, the former in commission, and eight torpedo boats. The personnel numbered over a thousand men and officers. The Indian Government made us an allowance in addition to our pay.

My old friend, Sir John Hext, a retired Rear-Admiral, was Director of Indian Marine. He was on leave, but

had left word that we were to take his bungalow in the dockyard until we were suited with quarters. John Hext was the soul of hospitality, and one of the best and cheeriest men I ever met.

The Admiralty had fitted out an obsolete troopship as quarters for the European officers and men of the defence. The Admiral, E. C. Drummond, granted me permission to put my wife up in my quarters, so after making some necessary alterations we shifted over to the *Tenasserim*, and very comfortable, cosy and cool quarters they proved to be.

Bombay was in a bad way with the plague. The mortality was over two hundred a day at one time, and it took most vigorous measures to reduce it; it was still prevalent when we left three years afterwards. It rarely attacked a white man, and I can only recall three deaths among Europeans while we were there. But it was an unhappy state of affairs, and the burning Ghât was always busy. Very often they threw the corpses into the sea, and we saw them floating past the ship. I believe the proper course to pursue is not to worry. It used to be the last thing we talked about at the Yacht Club, the great rendezvous for the Sahib Lōg. The Club was on the Bund opposite the ship, and I became Vice-Commodore and a member of the Committee.

Bombay then was an extraordinarily fascinating place. It possessed a population of nearly a million, and among it were people from every part of the East and a large number of Parsis. In the bazaars were Chinamen whose shops were full of Chinese wares and curios of excellent quality at reasonable prices, one for tourists and another for residents. It was no use trying to bargain with them. Excursions to the bazaar were always amusing and interesting. The streets were narrow, smelly, and not too well kept, and the houses—of which there were no two alike—fearfully ramshackle and innocent of paint, mostly built of wood and highly decorated. The majority of them carried an air of mystery, and one speculated as to what sort of work or business the occupants were engaged upon. We always drove on these occasions; no one of any pretensions ever walked, and the first purchase I made was a Victoria and a pair of horses, one a country bred and the other a waler. My stables were close to the ship.

The mild Hindoo, with his caste mark on his forehead,

predominated, but he had to make way for the Afghan, Pathan, Sikh, Baluch, or any fighting man, or be hustled into the gutter. Filthy Fakirs abounded, and an occasional Yogi. The haughty Brahmin was the most impressive of this motley throng. All these poured past in a constant stream. Occasionally we met a man apparently stupefied by bhang or opium. In addition to the shops and houses there was a liberal sprinkling of temples and mosques, from whence issued beating of tomtoms, clashing of gongs, and ringing of bells. Add to this innumerable beggars in disgusting rags, native children in the scantiest of attire, and you have a faint idea of the crowd. Every now and then came the native soldier with the air of a conqueror, clean and erect as he strode along. Then there were the smells, the variety and diversity of which were remarkable, the flights of parrots, the bullock gharries with a load of native women heavily veiled, the gharry wallah sitting on the shaft and twisting the animal's tail to make him go, and an occasional ticca gharry with a white man or an Eurasian, and you have an inkling of what the bazaar portion of the city was like.

This part of the city housed the native merchants. In the suburbs, especially near the cotton mills, lived the coolies and lower class of tradesmen, professional beggars *et hoc genus omne*, and finally there were quarters that one did not drive through. They were inhabited by women of the ancient and—in the East—honourable profession of the Courtesan tribe. Here were women of every nation under the sun, bar British.

Many Europeans lived—when their means permitted, and sometimes when they did not—on Malabar Hill. On its ridge were some sumptuous bungalows. This quarter was the fashionable drive in the afternoon after the midday siesta, after which a return was made to the Yacht Club for tea and 'Gup,' enlivened by a band on the lawn. In driving to Malabar Hill we had to pass Sonapur, the burning Ghât (that seemed to be for ever busy), and run the gauntlet of an insufferable odour. We paid a visit to it, and were not much impressed. The body is laid on a pile of logs and then others are stacked on it; plenty of kindling wood is added, and then the mourning party walk round the pile chanting and beating tomtoms: finally the chief mourner sets fire to the pyre. It is not edifying, and we fled before it was half over. At the towers of silence the Parsis expose their dead on a grating, and the

expectant vultures, perched on trees in the vicinity, swoop down after the attendants have withdrawn.

Many Europeans lived in the fort, the most central part of the city, and there were some good bungalows on the edge of the Maidan (an open plain). Among them were those of the Admiral and General. At Colaba, the western end of the island, were the quarters of the British troops, the gunners having a permanent mess celebrated for its hospitality. In my time it had a great name for mango fool, and there may still be some who remember the Eurasian waiter 'Father Tom' and his Hindoo assistant 'Jogi,' both of whom were skilled composers of the above. Some good bungalows were inhabited by rich natives, and were extremely handsome outwardly. They were always furnished in a very bizarre manner, for these people only value things for what they cost, and buy the most expensive things without regard to taste or congruity. There are some extremely handsome buildings in the city. The railway station is one of the finest I ever saw.

I soon found that I had a very good lot of officers. Their quarters were on the deck below mine. The rest of the ship was given over to the white crew. The native seamen, Lascars from Rhatnaguri on the East Coast, lived in the outships. Their Tindal, Ibrahim, was a very fine specimen, as indeed they all were, for we were always able to pick the best when a vacancy occurred. Ibrahim attended to that, and no doubt made his bit over it. These men were all Muslims. Quiet and obedient, they never gave any trouble, but I do not think they would be much use in a scrap. Their yearly festival of the Mohurrun was an interesting affair, and they presented my wife with a garland on such occasions.

I arrived at the conclusion that the treatment of the officers had been more in the line of firmness than conciliation and consideration. After a little experience I was able to relax several regulations that appeared harsh with regard to leave and duty. I had cause to congratulate myself with the results. A line of Tennyson's has often been uppermost in my mind, "He who only rules by terror doeth grievous wrong. Deep as hell I hold his error, let him listen to my song." The curious can find the rest under 'The Captain.'

The Turret Ships, old and obsolete, were terrors to handle. It was easier for the proverbial camel to pass

through the needle's eye than to steer them on a straight course. Their speed was very limited, and we had to arrange to go out on one tide and return on another. They were armed with four 10-inch muzzle-loading guns, and the turrets were worked by hand. I fancy the Admiralty must have heaved a sigh of relief when they palmed them off on the Indian Government and heard that they had arrived safely at Bombay. We could never have fought them under way, and the only way of doing so would have been to run them aground and use them as forts. The *Assaye* and *Plassy* could steam at a good speed for the times ; the torpedo boats were also good ones, and could be whacked up when required. I often made use of one to take friends across the harbour to the celebrated caves of Elephanta, a trip much appreciated. These well-known caves are in an island about six miles East of the city, and they are named from a gigantic stone elephant that once stood near the landing place ; very little of it now remains.

Every week I took out the gunboats and torpedo boats for tactics. Very often a guest accompanied me, for it was quite a popular show. We did our best to keep the Defence up to the mark, and there was always plenty of drill going on ; among such was the landing of a battalion in the early morning on the Maidan, and Cunningham-Foot, the First-Lieutenant, worked them up to a very good standard. When he succumbed to the climate and was invalided, the Admiralty sent out a very able man as his successor, Eric Back, who, as a Captain in the Great War, was blown up in the mysterious explosion of the Cruiser *Natal*. The Service lost a fine officer in Back.

I introduced an innovation that became very popular, namely, no afternoon work. Instead of the men having dinner at noon, drills and other work went on until 1 p.m., and they had the afternoon off. It is the custom in India for everyone to have a siesta after tiffin, and I did not see why we should be the exception.

My wife and I made many friends in this sociable community. We usually joined some party at the Yacht Club after the evening drive. However, I did not give up my bicycling, and as often as not took my exercise that way, getting thoroughly acquainted with the neighbourhood. I saw much more of the place, and had better opportunities of studying the natives in this way than the

majority, who only rode or drove. I covered some thousands of miles and visited all sorts of out-of-the-way places that I should never have seen otherwise.

The Dublin Fusiliers were stationed at Colaba, and I got very friendly with Colonel Cooper. I dined with him on St. Patrick's Day, and we all went over to the sergeants' mess, where there was an entertainment going on. He asked me to recite to them, and I complied with "How Bill Adams won the battle of Waterloo." It was well received, but after we left he told me that it had just been previously done by a sergeant! He added, for my consolation, that the general verdict was in my favour. We returned to the mess for supper, and I got off about 4 a.m., to find an anxious wife sitting up, for it was blowing rather hard. During the day I always used my galley (a six-oared boat), but at night a private toni (native boat), which I engaged by the month. They were somewhat crank, but all right when you knew them and sat in the middle. Even my wife used to use ours, much to the astonishment of the shoregoing people. After the arrival of the new flagship, as I was going off in my toni one night, the Commander, who was with me, thought he would like to try one too. He stepped in and promptly went overboard the other side. These canoes were paddled generally by a father and son.

The great event is the coming of the monsoon, or the 'burst' as it is called. This usually occurs early in June. One informant named 5 p.m. on the 5th as the regular time for it! As it would be impossible for the ships to remain in the open harbour during its continuance, the flotilla moved into Prince's Dock, a large commercial basin. It was very convenient, but decidedly noisy during the working hours, yet we got used to it, but not to the mosquitoes. Accordingly we moved on the 25th of May, but not until the 6th of July, at 4.30 p.m., thirty days later than foretold by my prophetic friend, did the monsoon burst, and then it *did* burst. We were out in the Victoria, and so furious were the onslaughts of wind and rain that we had to turn round and pull up with our backs to it, until it eased up. Meanwhile thunder and lightning played a continuous obligato.

June 22, 1897, was the Queen's diamond jubilee. To celebrate it we gave an 'At Home,' at which we had all the side-shows that are so easily provided by a warship, and a large party of guests went away quite pleased (at

least they said so), some with prizes won at competitions. For this show we engaged the band of the 21st Bombay Native Infantry, the old Marine Battalion in the days of John Company's Navy. A large party of us dined in the Bycullah Club to further celebrate this happy occasion. This club was quite one of the best of its kind out of England.

A curious incident occurred in the docks. An engineer driving to his ship late one night went over gharry, driver and horse into the basin ; the police and watchmen got the men and gharry out, but there was no sign of the horse. Next morning he was found alongside the *Tenasserim*, and the bluejackets soon had him out, apparently none the worse for his lengthy immersion. How he kept afloat all those hours remained a mystery.

My wife had a pet gazelle, a beautiful little creature and a great favourite. He very much enjoyed the dockyard, in which we let him loose after the working hours. The extraordinary antics he then indulged in were well worth watching. He had free run of our cabins, and dearly loved a drop of port wine, which he invariably came for at dinner, whether we had guests or not. Once he partook of champagne, and if ever an animal had a bad head he had one the next day. 'No more fizz for me, thank you,' was all over his face. When we went home we had, very much against our will, to leave him behind with my successor, who gave him to a man on shore. The gazelle butted him one day ; it was a habit of his, and purely play ; and the heartless beggar actually had him killed. He might have sent him to the Victoria Gardens, where they would have given him a home for the rest of his life. This butting propensity caused considerable merriment once when a shoregoing chaplain came off to perform divine service. He appeared in the middle of the sermon and proceeded to prod His Reverence. He had a companion in the shape of a bear, belonging to the men, a great favourite and very tame. It lived on the wooden deck that acted as a permanent awning, and it often caused some consternation to our guests to see Bruin poking his nose down the skylight. Once he fell overboard, and one of the men promptly went after him and held him up until picked up.

The servant problem was unknown in India then. It was the happy land for Mem Sahibs. The butler did everything, and if he robbed his mistress, to a certain

extent he never allowed anyone else to do so. In the East there are two forms of extortion, 'Bucksheesh' and 'Dustouri.' The former may be likened to tips, and the latter to commission. The butler expected dustouri on all bills and payments, and took care to get it. As payee, the Master and Mistress knew it, and submitted as the least line of resistance. You knew when he brought his book and you gave him a cheque that a percentage went into his pocket, but it was worth it. Our servants, with the exception of the coachman, grass-cutter and dog boy, were Goanese. These men are the best servants in India, and have a strain of Portuguese blood in them; they are Catholics, and bear Portuguese names. Our boys were Constancio and Pedro. The cook and his assistant, known as the 'Makee-Learn,' did not have to be called anything. Constancio was always called Constance, which caused some amusement when I went up-country to a place named Jeur with an American Astronomer, Professor Campbell, of Lick, to assist in taking observations of the total eclipse of 1898. One of the American ladies heard me shouting for Constance, and later she told me that she thought I had brought a maid with me. Our butler, Alexander de Souza, paid all these people, and, of course, extracted dustouri from each. He was an excellent fellow, served us faithfully, and could always be relied upon to provide a good menu for a dinner party. I am somewhat of a statistician, and found on leaving Bombay that we had dined 648 people. As for lunchers, I had kept no account; one did not in India, where any friend was welcome to drop in for tiffin. The butler prepared menus which were very amusing, some of the items being much camouflaged; for example, 'Carlo,' which resolved itself into Curlew; 'Russil Pups' became Brussel Sprouts; 'Billimunji,' Blancmange; and 'Posh-teg,' Poached Egg. Perhaps 'Roast Bastard' for Roast Turkey is the highest effort of genius. Natives never could pronounce my name, it was always 'Fillet.' Our butler could *spell* it all right, and consequently on one menu appeared 'Fleets of Beef!' The cook was a most resourceful man; he could always produce soup at the shortest notice, apparently not requiring that magic article 'Stock,' without which no self-respecting English cook will ever produce soup. Of course, being on board ship, he had to keep his kitchen clean, which is not the universal custom in the Shiny East. The Indian cooks

are, as a rule, dirty and untidy, in marked contrast to the Chinese. It reminds me of a story of a lady who had one of the latter and was bucking about it to a friend. They agreed to pay a surprise visit to their respective kitchens, going to the Indian first. A glance round was followed by a hurried departure ; it was too awful for words! The Chinaman's kitchen was very different ; spotless and clean, everything shining like a dollar, but the cook was washing his feet in the soup tureen. The dog boy looked after our fox-terrier 'Tartar,' who *would* lie in the sun, and eventually succumbed to its effects.

The eclipse occurred on January 22nd. Professor Campbell and his wife, two very attractive Americans, and Miss Beans, of San Francisco, arrived at Bombay in December, and becoming acquainted, he invited me to assist him in his observations, so I left on the 17th of January, with four of my officers, for his camp at Jeur. The American Consul, Mr. Comfort and Major Boileau, R.A., also joined the party. The camp was quite in the jungle ; it was cool, very comfortable and well provided, but it was a bad place for cobras. One very big one was killed the day we arrived, and I never got out of bed without looking to see where I put my feet. These creatures are fond of getting into your bed, and I know of a case of a man finding one under his pillow. We drilled during the day until Mr. Campbell pronounced us efficient, and 1 p.m. on the 22nd found us all in our places. It was a fine day and a clear sky, and at half-past one the eclipse commenced. My job, with an assistant, was to take photographs, and we took a dozen very successfully. It was Miss Beans, a very cheery girl, who was so surprised at my having a maidservant, and she did not forget to chaff me. On return to Bombay we made it as pleasant as we could for these nice people, whom I have seen several times since. The Professor and his wife are still at Lick Observatory, and he is a great Star in the Astronomical World.

In the autumn of 1897 we paid our first visit to Poona. The railway ascends the Ghâts in a zigzag, a reversing station being about half-way up. Parts of the ascent are rather terrifying to nervous people. A sad accident occurred a few years previously, caused by one of the bridges giving way ; the train plunged into the valley, and a great number perished. We found the Poona Hotel very comfortable and enjoyed our stay. We

visited the celebrated temple of Parbutti, Consort of Siva. The priests who showed us round would not take any fee for doing so ; it was not allowed, but the temple was situated on a hill, and they got over the difficulty by accompanying us to our carriage at the foot, and then, as it was not in the temple grounds, they were willing enough to take bucksheesh, rather wily and reminiscent of Gehazi.

We returned in time to hear the trial of the notorious Tilak, the editor of a native paper, who had been stirring up sedition, and had been awarded a term of imprisonment for the offence. The appeal was unsuccessful.

Whenever we went on any trips we always took our boys with us (in accordance with the custom), and very useful they were, as they acted as interpreters, were most solicitous for our comfort, and whenever we stopped brought welcome refreshments. It was the custom also when you went out to dinner to take your boy with you to help wait, and once (my wife was not there to look after me, for I had been ordered by the doctor to temporarily keep off wine), when I was just going to have some champagne, Constance interposed by saying decisively, "Mistress not allowing." I gave the fizz a pass. Another time he informed me in a very audible aside that "This is a very poor house, they have no Burruf" (ice).

The incident of the gazelle butting the Padre reminds me that when we could not obtain one the duty devolved upon me. With the aid of the band we used to have a full choral service, and I was worked up to intone, but drew the line at a discourse. Sailors and soldiers make an excellent congregation, and are very keen on singing. Of course they have their favourite hymns, one of which is not "For those in peril on the Sea" ; it does not appeal to them somehow. One of our men was heard asking another what an anthem was ; the reply was, "If I was to say to you, Bill give me, give me that, Bill give me that, that handspike, Bill give me that handspike, it would be a Hanthem. But if I was to say, Bill, give me that handspike, it would not be a Hanthem." Not a bad definition. We had a very good little string band of fourteen performers, all Goanese. These people have very fair musical talent.

Early in 1898 the plague got very bad, and at the request of General Gatacre, who was superintending the

plague operations, I landed a party under Lieutenant Mansergh ; it did excellent service. As all sailors do, they paid great attention to details, and their camp was a model one. They deservedly received the thanks and praise of the General on completion of their unaccustomed work. I used sometimes to go round with Mansergh in the mornings when he went on his house-to-house search for the victims, and it was a very horrible experience. The people were quite apathetic, and we always had to make them clear out the dead, round whom they would remain sitting in a sort of dull stupor. Mansergh was an officer of great promise, but his career was abruptly terminated about three years later, when he perished in a submarine with all the crew. All who knew this fine young fellow felt his loss very much. General Gatacre—who was known as General Backacher—was a hard-working, impetuous man, and gingered up all those who were working under him, getting always full value, but he was deservedly popular.

To add to the above trouble, riots broke out in Bombay, chiefly caused by plague restrictions. There are always plenty of agitators in every land, and India is no exception, but the people could not understand the reason for any restrictions. Two men of the Shropshire Regiment were attacked in the bazaar and killed with Lathis (long sticks with a heavy weight on the end), and the whole of the native city was in an uproar. General Gatacre called out all the troops and applied to me for assistance, so every available man was landed. One of our detachments was sent to a hospital in the suburbs that was rather isolated, and about which we had been very uneasy. The bluejackets arrived to find that the nurses had barricaded themselves in and were in considerable dread ; their relief when Jack appeared may be imagined. I had great difficulty in getting this detachment back, it seemed so necessary. Men will always be ready to do 'Sentry Go' when they are supplied with cocoa and biscuits every hour. About this time I was appointed a Justice of the Peace for Bombay, but I had no inclination for that class of duty. During my career in the Navy the most unpleasant feature of the Service was 'Telling off Defaulters,' and one does not wish to carry that sort of thing into private life. During the riots I made a practice of visiting our detachments. My secretary went with me, and we rode through the native

quarters without any attempt at molestation, but we took care to carry revolvers and to display them somewhat ostentatiously.

The riots did not worry the Europeans much. The social routine went on as usual, but when we went out to dinner I took an armed man on the box-seat for precaution's sake. It would be mere banality for me to describe all the events that went on; of these the race meetings and gymkhanas were the most enjoyable. You knew everyone, and such events were not only social gatherings, but you could get a run for your money if you felt that way. Of course there was polo, and the *Defence* sported a team, Eric Back, Cyril Corbett, Archibald Courage and P. G. Brown, all Lieutenants; Back I have already mentioned. Corbett, known to all as 'The little Man,' was a light-weight rider, and was in great demand at the meetings, and he was very successful at the gymkhanas. In the ladies' events he always asked my wife to partner him, and she has several trophies won by their united efforts. Alas! he died soon after his return home, a great shock to all of us, for he had won our affection, and would have been a bright ornament to the Service had he lived. The other two good fellows are still to the fore, and long may they flourish.

We paid a visit in May, 1898, to Matheran, the nearest hill station to Bombay. My wife was carried up from the station in a jampan, but I preferred to ride; the gruntings and contortions of the bearers give one the impression that they are suffering pain in some way, which is no doubt what is intended, with a view to increased bucksheesh. We spent a very comfortable fortnight at this place, which is moderately cool.

The monsoon was more punctual that year, for it burst on the 8th of June, so the prophet's date was not so far out this time. We were in Princes Dock according to schedule, and remained there until October.

Soon after my return I sat on a Court of Inquiry on a brother Captain, who had got his ship on shore; his defence was that the waters where it happened were imperfectly surveyed, and he was exonerated. He amused me by saying that among other precautions he had steamed with his starboard anchor and twelve fathoms of cable hanging from the bow; unfortunately the ship struck on the port side. He had an incompetent navigator, and one night I was dug out at midnight and found him

with the delinquent waiting for me on the quarterdeck. He proceeded to report him for not being able to find the Pole Star, and asked me what I thought of such a navigator. I advised a prescription for the complaint, and shortly after the officer was sent home.

On December 1, 1898, we started on a tour in Central India. I shall not describe it, for it has been often done, and the connections are historical. I shall confine myself to a very few generalities. We took our boys, and through the kindness of friends we travelled in a private car. At every important station we were examined for plague by native doctors ; one, to my surprise, was a woman. Once we were turned in, and I am afraid I was not very polite and said something at which my wife (whom the doctor had not noticed) laughed. He gave a shocked exclamation and hurriedly withdrew.

We went first to Karamnasa, about twelve miles from Mogul Serai, and spent a few days in the jungle with my cousin, Walter Garland, a Civil Engineer who was constructing a railway. One bridge over the Sone River was two miles long. The superstitious natives believed that each pier would cost a life ; a good many have. My wife was very interested in the sinking of the Caissons in which the piers are built. One was not going down properly, and she sat down to watch the men at work ; suddenly it uprighted itself. The next day a deputation waited on my cousin and asked if the Burra Mem Sahib would come and do the same for another refractory one!

Next we went to the holy city of Benares, where we made the acquaintance of a celebrated Swami. At this place of learning a Professor at the English College showed a high-caste Brahmin a drop of water highly magnified. It was crowded with struggling animalcules ; the man gazed at it with horror, realizing that he had been engaged in destroying life in a wholesale manner. On his return home he committed suicide.

Then on to Lucknow, of undying memory ; Cawnpore, place of horrors ; Agra, of beauty ; the Taj predominating. In the palace the guide pointed out a well down which he said the ladies who had made 'mistakes' were flung! As the Harem accommodated 3,000 women, these were probably many. Fattehpore Sikri, an example of Oriental extravagance. Delhi, city of marvels, beauty and final triumph. Jeypore, with its deserted city of Amber, more Oriental magnificence. Finally, Ahmedabad

and Baroda, both a profusion of tombs. We had had a remarkably interesting tour, the memory of which has never left me, and I should like to do it again. The chief charm was that we seemed to have it all to ourselves. It was before the days of tourists and motor-cars.

We arrived back in February, 1899, to find the season in full swing, and Lord and Lady Curzon, the Commander-in-Chief, numerous Generals, and our own Admiral arrived. Indian officials had flocked to greet the Viceroy. I had the pleasure of meeting all these, and being duly impressed. Toward the end of May it became slacker, and we took a breather by going to the hill station at Khandalla for a fortnight. There the climate was good, and there were plenty of agreeable people ; the only fly in the ointment was the perpetual cry of the ' Brainfever ' bird, that always seemed to be on duty. It has earned the above name from its irritating monotony, which is supposed in time to have that effect. A visit to the celebrated caves of Kali interested us immensely.

The official functions at Bombay were very interesting. The most scrupulous adherence to precedence is practised in India, and you may be sure that everyone knows exactly where he (and his Mem Sahib) should be placed. As one had to appear in full dress when the Viceroy was present, it rather detracted from the enjoyment. It is not the climate for glad rags, and I used to envy the natives in their loose robes and jewelled ornaments. It is singular how the East differs from the West in the matter of men wearing jewellery ; here it is considered effeminate ; there it is good form to show that you are the possessor of priceless gems. I don't believe after all that it is quite a matter of taste, but rather one of clothes ; fancy a man in a tall hat, frock coat, light pants, etc., and a string of priceless pearls round his neck.

The monsoon again lived up to its reputation, and came early in June. Having made its debut, life in Bombay became normal ; the tumult had died down, the Captains had departed, and the Yacht Club was once more sacred to its habituées. Early in the year we had had a tremendous fillip by receiving sheaves of telegrams that we were on the verge of a war with France. This was a sort of bugbear that was occasionally varied by a Russian scare. This time we prepared to seize a fine Messageries Maritimes Steamer in the harbour that would have brought us all in a handsome share of prize money,

but we licked our lips in vain. Since then the Great War has forged fetters of friendship between the two countries that should never be allowed to rust. A severance would mean disaster for both of us ultimately. To a vast number of the British even a dispute is unpalatable. If only our legislators would recall the fact that hundreds of thousands of our dearest and best lie in French soil, they would recognize the truth of this. Even to some of *them* a little bit of French soil may be sacred.

In August my wife and I were invited to Government House at Ganeshkind, near Poona, where Lord and Lady Sandhurst were in residence ; we spent an enjoyable week there. The surprising feature of this place was the enormous number of servants. One is accustomed to a good many in India, but here they seemed to fall over each other. We took our own boys, but they were not allowed beyond our rooms. One misses these boys more than anything on leaving India ; mine did everything for me, even mending, and was invaluable when dressing, but I drew the line when he wanted to tuck my shirt in for me! The Governor's servants no doubt looked down upon ours, although we were Burra Sahibs. But are not all the Jeames in high position usually of this kidney?

I was much attracted by the Governor's bodyguard of one hundred picked Sowars, all fine good-looking men, Rajpoots mostly. The Captain, Leveson-Gower, and the Subaltern, Lawrence, were equally so, and good specimens of the British Raj. They made a fine appearance in their scarlet tunics, white knee breeches, and tall riding boots, their dark faces, fierce moustaches and curled beards overshadowed by their lofty turbans. They were well horsed, and the animals were splendidly groomed. Some were always on guard at Government House, and those on sentry carried spears. Their carriage was magnificently stately.

After this visit we returned to Bombay, and in October the Boer War broke out, and regiments began to arrive from up-country and embark for South Africa. The events of that war and its remarkable fluctuations are too well known to need any remarks from me. I can vividly recall the varying sensation that we experienced, and the trying times we went through as fortune shifted from or toward us, and the anxiety of that time. I can also recall

a distinguished General at the Club telling me that we should want 60,000 men out there before we could finish it in our favour ; as it was, it took 250,000.

At the end of October a telegram reached me offering me command of the *Howe* flagship at Queenstown, Ireland, and I replied accepting. Later my successor, Captain Greet, arrived. The two names afforded the local papers a good opportunity for copy, and there was some good-natured banter about 'Greeting the New Man' and 'Speeding the Fleeting One,' and so on. I was ordered to return in the last week of December, and on the 9th we cleared out of the *Tenasserim*, and went to live at the Bank of Bengal with our friend Harry Gray, the manager. He was universally known as 'Hurry Gurry,' from the native way of pronouncing his name. This most popular man insisted upon our staying with him until we embarked, so we remained until December 23rd, when we embarked in the old *Shannon* again.

Before we left the *Tenasserim* a ball was given by the *Defence*. We brought the *Plassy* alongside to supply the power for an electric circuit, and lit up the whole ship brilliantly ; trophies and other decorations adorned the decks ; our band supplied the music, and we kept up the show until 3 a.m. Over three hundred guests came off, and we had supper in the wardroom. Back was chiefly responsible for the arrangements, which went off without a hitch. The next day we had a children's party, and mustered about three dozen happy little boys and girls, not many, but India is no place for white 'Bachchas' (children). They were all accompanied by Ayahs and Bearers, and it was pleasant to note how solicitous these people were for the safety of their charges.

We were now chiefly occupied in packing up and with farewell dinners. It was extremely pleasant to discover how many friends we had made and how much they regretted our departure. From the 9th to the 23rd we dined with different people, not even excepting Sundays, the most gratifying dinner being the one given us by the officers, which finished with a singsong. We left at midnight amid cheers and singing of 'Auld Lang Syne.' It was indeed a wrench to bid them farewell, and a real happiness to look back and recall how we parted on such good terms. What gratified me was the esteem in which they held my wife. She had made good friends of all of them without distinction, and having had the good

sense to avoid interference with Service matters, but on the contrary to efface herself, her residence on board had been a complete success, in spite of croakers who foretold trouble. But there are always people of that sort.

On December 23, 1899, we crawled, in a most debilitated state, the result of so much festivity, on board the *Shannon*, and passed the plague examination successfully. Our faithful boys saw us off from the wharf, and the Parsi Contractor garlanded us in the usual fashion on such occasions, and at 2.30 p.m. the good ship slipped and steamed out of harbour, to the final accompaniment of cheers from the *Tenasserim*.

We had an empty ship ; only one or two passengers, one of whom was F. L. Petre, whom we discovered to be a cousin of one of my late officers. He was an excellent companion, and we maintained our acquaintance with him in after-life, thereby making friends with his equally pleasant wife. Petre had just retired from the I.C.S., and has since done a good deal of literary work.

On our arrival at Aden on the 28th we transhipped to the *India*. This ship was one of the best of the P. and O. of that time. Having come from Australia, most of the passengers were from that country, but we were not by any means a full ship, and we were—probably on that account—a very cheerful and friendly lot. There was only one exception, and it almost goes without saying that he was a German, a Count Muntz, and I regret to say a naval officer. He was a full-sized gasbag, and eaten up with conceit ; we all detested him, and used to conspire to take rises out of him with considerable success.

We arrived at Marseilles on January 6, 1900, and disembarking, passed through Paris to Calais, and crossing to Dover on the 7th, arrived at Charing Cross that evening. Here we were met, among others, by our son, who had developed into a sturdy, bright little chap of eleven. Once more united, we took up our quarters in Stanhope Gardens.

The journey through France was none too pleasant. Things were going badly for us in South Africa, and the French, if not actively hostile, were not pleasant to the British passing through their country. But we have forgiven all that.

This chapter moved me to burst forth into song, and I ask my readers to be merciful.

THE SHINY EAST.

Then it's South across the dreaded Bay, then East to the tropic seas,
And you reach a land of tigers, mosquitoes, scorpions, fleas.
Where the rising sun lights up the pools where alligators lurk,
Then sets on a scorched and panting earth enwrapped in a coppery murk.

Where the temple bells and the muezzin's call vie with the sonorous gong,
And tomtoms throb at the Burning Ghât while mourners mutter a song.
Where the vultures perch near the silent tower waiting for Parsi dead,
And the flying foxes flutter at eve, and parrots chatter o'erhead.

A land of revolt and anarchy, then Akbar the conqueror came
And took the land and ruled it well, but left us only a name
And an empty palace, a gem of beauty. Now buzzards sit on the wall,
And lizards bask in the marble court and swallows nest in the hall.

A land that allures with its monuments, legends, ivory thrones,
A land of the mosque and minaret, tombs set with glittering stones.
A land of gruesome mysteries, weird mixture of heavens and hells,
Bazaars with handwoven carpets, jewellery, curios—SMELLS.

Where the sturdy Ghurka and stately Sikh elbow the wild Pathan,
And the Rajput sneers at Afridi and despises the fierce Afghan.
But the Bunya sells his goods in peace, though ruffians stalk at large,
For it's never safe to plunder a man under the British Raj.

For the man of the East serves him of the West, and serves him truly too.
Honour and justice win the trust, and love, of the mild Hindoo,
Whether his caste be low or high, sweeper or fighting man,
He knows a Sahib when he meets one and gives him the best he can.

In the bungalow on the shimmering plain the Sahib Lōg lives and grills,
And longs for the day when they get away to the stations upon the hills.
And even the native moans in his sleep in the city's festering reek,
Ere the monsoon's break brings in its wake life and rest to the weak.

The East was not made for the white man, body and mind pay toll.
It gives him its worst and takes his best, he oftimes pays with his soul.
But he serves because it's his duty, the British are built that way,
That, no matter whatever their Jat is, men have freedom to work and pray.

Some parts are British for ever, to hold as a right and with pride.
Where for GOD, their King and their Country, our men and our women died.
A legacy sacred and binding, a solemn unanimous vow
Of remembrance of Heroes who perished at Delhi, Cawnpore, and Lucknow.

CHAPTER XVII

THE *HOWE, EMPRESS OF INDIA, THAMES,* AND *EOLUS*

Variety's the very spice of life,
That gives it all its flavour.

WHEN you arrive at the end of this chapter I think you will admit that I am justified in putting the above lines of Cowper at the head of it, for while holding the post of Flag-Captain at Queenstown I served in no less than four ships—typical of the constant changes that went on at that time, and especially marked in the case of officers. I think that during the above period (three years) I had no less than twenty-six Lieutenants pass through the flagship. It was the age of transition, and we were more or less in the melting-pot. I consider that Jacky Fisher did an immense lot of good and straightened up things materially by his later organization. He was a great man, was Jacky.

On arrival in England I had every intention of taking my full-pay leave, to which I was entitled, so I only stayed a week in London and then went over to Queenstown, intending to return at once. In my ignorance I reckoned without the Admiralty, for I was calmly informed that I had forfeited my leave by joining. Nothing daunted, I put in for six weeks' annual leave, and started back, getting as far as Pembroke, where I was held up by a wire. It merely stated that there was a question about my leave, and directed me to await further instructions. I spent the day with the Captain-Superintendent of the yard. 'Billy Barlow,' an old friend and a very popular man in the Service. Billy would have preferred a seagoing ship to life in a 'Stone Frigate.' Another wire, fully satisfactory, arrived during the afternoon, and I rejoined my family.

My Admiral at Queenstown was Atwell Lake, a very old friend whom I first met in the Mediterranean when he was Commander of the *Alexandra,* Sir Geoffrey Hornby's flagship. He was a very smart officer and an excellent companion.

My leave passed rapidly ; there seemed to be shoals of friends to visit ; and we had to send our furniture over to Queenstown, where I had taken a house that my wife quite approved of when she arrived. It was out of Queenstown, in the suburb of Rushbrooke, and rejoiced in the name of 'Arrigadeen,' which is Celtic for 'A little silver Brook.' I had measured all the rooms for carpets, and chosen the wallpapers, so we found the house nearly ready for occupation ; most expeditious were tradesmen of those happy days ! We stayed at Admiralty House for a week and then moved in, glad to find ourselves once more among our *Lares et Penates.* The servant problem was still quiescent and we soon got suited, never making a change during our three years of residence. The women were Irish and Catholics, and my man and the boy Heretics, but they got on famously. The parlourmaid was an exceedingly pretty girl, even for an Irish Colleen, which rather tended to keep the man at home, especially as he had a rival in my coxswain.

The *Howe* was the ship that I liked less than any I served in. She was an improvement on the *Magdala,* but I had never had to live on the latter, while in the former I had to be always ready to turn out every quarter with the Home Fleet, that consisted of all the ships stationed at various ports in the United Kingdom. Four times a year we assembled, under Admiral Sir Gerard Noel, and it did men and officers a lot of good to be worked up by such an energetic and capable officer as 'Gerry Noel.' I liked him very much, although I thought him rather a crank on fleet tactics. He had a great fancy for changing columns, by doing a manœuvre we called the 'Gridiron,' and I have done it four or five times in a forenoon. It was my theory then (and I have seen nothing to cause me to change it), that manœuvres in the face of the enemy would be undesirable, and that ships would have to fight in line as much as possible. In those days we always acted as if battles would be fought at close range, and I imagine that the Naval Constructors were of the same opinion, which

accounts for the heavy side armour that ships carried; the Great War has probably dispelled that idea. Possibly if our ships had had armour over their decks instead of their sides we might have suffered less severely. Owing to the immense distance at which the actions commenced and were fought, the projectiles descended vertically on their targets instead of obligingly striking the armoured sides.

The *Howe* was known as the Irish Flagship. In a previous commission she had sustained great damage from having been on shore, and it is doubtful whether she ever recovered from the strain. One of the officers informed me in a burst of confidence that she was called the 'Anyhow.' I lay low and secretly determined to try to make her earn a better sobriquet. The crew of five hundred men was mostly Irish. They were very amenable to proper treatment and discipline, beside being cheerful and good-tempered. As a crowd they were not so clean as the British.

As for the country people, they were a continual delight to me, quick to see a joke and very apt at repartee. I had experience of this on my bicycling rambles. I only once experienced rudeness, and that was from an old woman. The Chaplain, H. S. Wood, and I, were taking a rest during one of our trips, and when she passed us there was no mistaking the fact that we were being abused frequently in Celtic; why or wherefore I know not, for we had not said a word to her. I think she must have been a bigoted R.C. and spotted Wood as a heretic parson. He was really a most broad-minded man, a splendid shipmate, and a friend of all ranks. He became Archdeacon of the Navy, and filled the office with great credit.

When I laughingly asked a man at Bantry if there was any landlord-shooting on, or whether it was the close season, he took it in great good part and said we did them an injustice, as only the bad men did that sort of thing. No one can deny them a keen sense of humour, and also that they have a habit of looking at things from the comic side. The following is perhaps more illustrative of tragedy: From Ballynear to Ballyfar the railway is a single line, and apparently not run on any recognized system, for the stationmaster of the former place once started the train without consulting any one. While he was watching it disappear in the distance, the

signalman stuck his head out of the box and said, "Did ye sthart her?" "I did," replied the other. "An' me just callin' the wan from Ballyfar," cried the signalman. The other rubbed his hands, saying, "Be gor, she'll meet her match!"

While on the subject of Irish railways, here is another story. An Irish gentleman of position got out at a station for refreshment, and took so long that when he came out the train was pulling out. Bubbling over with rage, he was at a loss what to do. He caught sight of a porter stooping down adjusting his bootlace; he rushed at him and, giving him a hearty kick, exclaimed, "Damn you, you're always doing that." This blew off the steam a bit!

Another, rather typical of these people's willingness to oblige. Two of my officers found themselves in Cork late at night and all trains gone, not another until the morning. A porter said he thought something might be done. He took them to the engine-shed and made their plight known to a driver, who was putting up his engine, with the result that the man ran them down to Queenstown for a couple of sovereigns. For a further *douceur* he consented to 'Let her Go.' It is only fourteen miles, but there was plenty of time to get a good bat on, and the driver did it to his own satisfaction and theirs.

I found it rather difficult to avoid picking up the brogue, which really from Irish lips, especially pretty ones, is rather pleasant, and which one unconsciously adopted. But what are you to make of the following that I heard shouted by a Petty Officer at an offender? He began with "Come out of that." The reply was some prevaricating excuse, to which the Petty Officer returned, "Come out of that whatever it is, no matter which it is, I tell ye." That these people have a sense of humour may be gathered from the following: When on a bicycle ride, I got off and asked a man I met, "Where does this road go to?" He replied, "Well, it's been here fifty years and it has not gone annywhere yet."

Even the dogs in the Emerald Isle seem to develop curious traits. We had two in the *Howe*, a retriever called 'Shot,' and an Aberdeen, of course called 'Jock,' both great friends with the ship's cat. Some officers took Jock to Cork; on his return both Shot and the cat

disowned him. After a time the men said that it wasn't our Jock, and the officers began to think so too. Then came a letter from a doctor at Kinsale, saying he had an Aberdeen that did not seem to be his own and that he heard there was one in the *Howe*; had they got the right one? Notes were compared; they had all been in Cork the same day and the dogs had got changed in some mysterious manner. Probably they arranged it themselves, and each one put the other wise, for the dog that came to the *Howe* got into the boat and went up the ship's side just like a ship's dog. The owners met in Cork and an exchange was effected. Our Jock settled down again, warmly welcomed by Shot and the cat. An interesting fact is that the doctor's children would have nothing to say to our Jock; he did not take them in at all.

Jerry, a car driver at Rushbrooke, was a great character. He was taking my wife out calling on the 'Quality,' and they overtook a funeral; he intimated that it would be manners if they fell in with the procession just to 'Pay respect to the corpse.' Accordingly they followed for a considerable distance, but at last my wife, getting wearied of such continued respect, suggested that they might drop out and commence calling. "'Deed and I think so, Mam," replied Jerry, and turned up the next lane. Would such a thing have occurred to an English driver?

Old Jerry was a great soaker; it eventually finished him off. He drove me out to the house one day in pouring rain, and when I got off I said, "Jerry, don't you wish it was whisky?" "If I had the 'Inside,' I'd be filling it!" he cried, with a beaming face, his eyes sparkling at the mere idea. By 'Inside' he meant an inside car as distinct from an outside one like the one we were using at the time. The former is covered over and the latter open, but you have to get used to them, for they are decidedly wobbly. Before I grew accustomed to them I was rather puzzled after a dinner party by hearing the butler announce "Mrs. O'Toole's inside is coming up!" In other words, the covered car was drawing up to the front door. At first I feared the lady had been taken ill.

Jerry was a knowing old rascal, and he told me that he had often taken tourists out to the old castle at Fota and palmed it off as Blarney Castle. But

ignorance is bliss. Those people would be quite assured for the rest of their lives that they had visited the famous old castle. Blarney was within easy distance of Queenstown, and I cycled there several times, but never attempted to kiss the stone ; a friend (at least he posed as one) told me I had no need to. A bluejacket, who was performing this feat (it was a feat, for you had to be held by them), fell, saving his life by being caught in the branches of a tree.

That a soft answer turneth away wrath is still believed in by these people. The Channel Fleet was in the harbour, and our cook reported that the kidneys ordered for breakfast had not come. Moreover, the man had told her that they had been sent off to one of the ships. Full up with a grievance, I called on the butcher. "What's this ! Am I your constant customer or not? Why do you send my orders off to occasional visitors? If you don't want my custom I'll go somewhere else." Grogan made no reply, but turned round to his man. "Send the Captain some sweetbreads and don't charge him with them." The cheek of the thing so tickled me that I could only exclaim, "Confound you, I don't want your sweetbreads, but I did want my kidneys."

And they are very obliging. Leaving for Cork in a hurry I forgot my purse, and did not discover it until I arrived at the station. I went to the stationmaster and told him of my plight. He led me into the ticket office, opened the till, and said, "Help yerself, Captain."

There is undoubtedly a different psychology about the Irish as compared to the English, and, at that time, they were more amusing and consequently more attractive. The country is depressing : stone walls instead of hedges, ruined cottages (very often a mere heap of stones), decayed churches (mementoes of disestablishment), and ill-kept farms are not cheerful objects. I am writing of the South as I knew it. At Bantry a girl showed me a glen opening on the sea that within her memory contained a small village ; now there was not a vestige of a building left or a sign that anyone had ever lived there.

Queenstown (or Cork) Harbour used to be a great port of call for Homeward Bounders. In my time it was no uncommon sight to see half a dozen full-rigged ships lying at anchor, waiting for orders ; these graceful craft

had not entirely been pushed off the sea by dirty little tramps.

The Commander's time expired, and I wrote to my old shipmate and friend, E. H. Moubray, and much to my satisfaction he accepted and was appointed. After the *Tartar*, he had been under me at Bombay in the *Pigeon*. 'Jummie,' as he was known to his pals, was a great acquisition. He is now a retired Admiral. *Eheu tempus fugaces!* Mansergh also came to us and remained until he joined the submarine service, where he met his sad end. It was a pleasure to have these two with me again.

Race meetings, horse shows, concerts and other festivities filled up our spare time, and in the season there was hunting, at which naval and military officers were welcomed. A well-known resident, Mr. Murphy, of Annmount, drove us to the meets sometimes on his coach, and we usually got a good view of Renard; the stone walls were pretty tough propositions. The society of Queenstown was mostly composed of Service people, and very fluctuating, but the residents were very hospitable. My wife, when returning a visit to some ladies, found the front-door bell broken, and a handbell standing on the front step with a request attached to it for callers to use it. It was still in use when we paid our P.P.C. call nearly three years later! Rather typical this. The same ladies kept fowls, and my wife was rather staggered by finding a hen sitting on the back of a chair in the drawing-room. At our farewell visit the lady of the house was ill in bed, but we were informed that she was quite happy, as there was a brood of chickens in her room! The flagship's band was quite a good one, and our bandmaster, Signor Carrozza (he was a Maltese, but passed as an Italian), had worked it up into a very good string band, as well as a reed one. We used to have matinées, and invite the Quality. One of the officers married an Irish girl of the neighbourhood; the band was engaged for the ceremony, and travelled by the same train as our party did. On arrival I asked the Signor if he had brought the 'Voice that breathed o'er Eden.' "No, Sir," he replied. "But I have brought Santoy." That wedding finished most hilariously. By some mischance the breakfast never arrived from Cork, but there was 'Lashins of Fizz'; so much so that the hastily improvised refreshment did not act as sufficient

antidote, and most of us got—well—joyful. Two old maiden Aunts had to be put to bed then and there. But it was an 'Illigant Weddin'.' We had some bonnet hops on board too, for which the quarterdeck of the *Empress* was most suitable. Going off to one of them I found a picket boat filled with a bevy of disconsolate damsels. "What is the matter," I inquired. "We're waiting for our chaperons." It was the days when such people were still considered necessary. I jumped into the boat and said, "I adopt you all as nieces, but I won't be responsible for you after we are on board." Smiles now took the place of woe; we shoved off and I handed them over to their partners and did not have to trouble myself any more. But it was remarkable how many girls in Queenstown called me Uncle after that day!

The *Howe* had been left out of the spring cruise, and we went round to Bantry for target practice. Our stay was somewhat protracted, and the Padre and I took a trip to Killarney on our bicycles. We went first to Glengariff, a fascinating little spot, and then on to Kenmare, and made the latter place our headquarters, from whence we visited Killarney and the neighbourhood.

For the July cruise we joined the Home Fleet off the Start; this was our introduction to it, and the ships made a fine spectacle as they closed us. In no time the Admiral had gathered us into his net; we were no longer free and independent citizens, but merely one of the hounds held in leash by an Autocrat.

These cruises were very much like the description of life, "One damn thing after another." Gerry was out for business and kept us at it; however, he generally gave us a week-end at some good place, but we felt inclined to rebel when in Dublin Bay he refused the Viceroy's invitation to the Admiral and Captains to dine with him at the Castle. He declined on the grounds that we were out for work and not for play; I think he must have had a fit of liver. I certainly regretted the refusal, as it would have been a pleasant experience. We visited, in addition to the above, most of the Welsh Harbours, and finished with Plymouth. In this way we got familiar with our own coast, and, given good weather, these cruises were always enjoyable. But sometimes we got very bad fogs; then life became very strenuous. Our next in the line was a ship with a very bad

reputation, the *Camperdown*, or more generally the *Crampherdown*. Ever since this ship had rammed and sunk the *Victoria* she had been regarded with distrust; nobody liked to have her astern. Later on, when we paid off the *Howe* and took over the *Empress of India*, we had our culminating experience of her. The Home Fleet left Bantry in fine weather for Kinsale, and was almost immediately smothered in an usually dense fog; the *Camperdown* was still astern of us, and made several ill-natured attempts to ram us. The last time she nearly pulled it off and came within five feet. A miss is as good as a mile, but the point was that the newspapers got hold of it and produced scare-lines with "Narrow escape of the *Empress of India*. The *Camperdown* nearly rams the next Ahead," and so on. The Admiralty wrote down to the Admiral, who sent for me. Of course I did not give away anybody, and I am not going to now, and that was the last I heard of it. On these trips we used to do a good deal of cruising at night without lights, and the *Trafalgar* nearly bagged the Holyhead mailboat with a hundred and fifty passengers on board, many of whom got the scare of their lives; but she escaped with the loss of a plate or two. I don't think the *Traffie* was much to blame; so many ships *would* try to cut in between our lines, then they would stop, blow off steam, and whistle in a helpless manner. On this occasion the Holyhead boat protested that she never saw any of us; I have my doubts. Our practice was much condemned by Merchant Captains at the time, but the Great War has reconciled them to it, I am sure, and we simply had to get used to it.

For the autumn cruise we visited most of the Irish ports, finishing with Lamlash, where we had the misfortune to lose one of our best men, a diver. He went down with another man in thirty fathoms, a great depth, and on being hauled up (with all due precautions) collapsed and died. The only words he uttered after his helmet had been removed were "It's a long lane that has no turning"; meaning that he had been a long time coming up. He was a Roman Catholic, and as I had known him when he was coxswain to an old friend of mine, Captain J. H. Pipon (Pipes), I went to his funeral; he was buried at Buncrana. I told the priest to march with me. Presently a graveyard came in view, very well kept, and I remarked that he had

got it looking very nice. He replied that it was the Protestant one. Presently theirs hove in sight, a terrible contrast—ill-kept, the walls crumbling, and finally, the prepared grave half full of water. Yet the priests have tremendous authority over their parishioners. Once or twice they tried to stop recruiting for the Navy by forbidding boys to join the training ship *Black Prince* at Queenstown, but the Admiral was too wily for them. I am not a partisan for any particular religion, because I firmly believe that if a man leads a good life and does his best for humanity it is not of much importance in what manner he worships his God, but he must do it himself, and not leave it to others to do for him.

In January, 1901, we went on leave to London, and on the 22nd Queen Victoria died at Osborne. The shock to the nation was a great one. For days, indeed for the rest of the time we were in London, until our return to Queenstown on February 23rd, everyone wore black. and I never saw the capital look so sombre ; there was an extraordinary air of gloom. People looked as if we had lost more than a great Queen, and so we had, for she was also a great woman.

All warships were ordered to assemble at Portsmouth to render homage to Her Majesty's remains when brought over from Osborne for interment at Frogmore. I hurried over to Queenstown and came over in the *Howe*, and we moored in a long line of ships that extended along the Solent from Osborne to Spithead.

On the 1st of February the coffin started from Osborne and was put on board the *Alberta*. As she came abreast of us, steaming very slowly, we saw that in the bow of the little craft stood a Lieutenant, a prominent figure, and that on the quarterdeck (on a raised canopy) rested the coffin. Four destroyers, two on each beam, acted as escort. Then came the *Osborne, Victoria and Albert, Enchantress,* and the Trinity House Yacht. The sight was solemn and intensely emotional, and I noticed that the officer who stood next to me was much affected by it. The passing of our great Queen recalled her many noble and sympathetic qualities. The ships in the line fired minute guns until the cortège entered the harbour. Then the *Victory* took it up, ceasing when the *Alberta* was berthed alongside at Gosport. Thus the body of the Queen passed on its first stage toward its final resting place along lines of warships (including

one from every naval Power) with colours, half-masted, ships manned, bands playing the funeral march of Chopin —I believe Queen Victoria left instructions as to this— and guards presenting arms. We rendered all the honours that we could. It was an extraordinary instance of a most befitting ceremony.

After the *Alberta* had berthed, four Admirals guarded the coffin during the night. On the following morning all Admirals and Captains assembled at 7 a.m. at the station. Ere long the coffin was brought on shore and placed in a carriage specially prepared for the purpose. Immediately behind it walked King Edward, members of the Royal Family, and relatives belonging to other Royal Houses. I was able to identify most of them as they slowly passed between our ranks. It was the most impressive ceremony that I ever took part in, and the absence of a crowd made it more intense. The coffin was carried by bluejackets ; it was a most remarkable shape, very short, but the other dimensions greater than usual. It was said that the bluejackets were substituted at the eleventh hour for the gillies, who were to have performed that office but who proved not to be sufficiently expert, furthermore that our men had been trained by a far-seeing officer in anticipation of such a contingency. Rumour stated that they had been practised in lifting a coffin filled with sand until they could do so without spilling any of it. By a curious coincidence bluejackets had to come to the rescue again at Windsor. It was a very cold day, and the horses that were to draw the gun-carriage got a chill while waiting, so the men of the naval guard-of-honour were requisitioned, and, manning the drag-ropes, drew the coffin to its final resting place. They were the fittest men to perform this last office for the great Island Queen.

I went on board the *Alberta* to look at the canopy on which the coffin had rested. It was covered with deep crimson velvet, and I secured a piece of it as a souvenir ; it is now framed and, with Queen Victoria's signature superimposed upon it, hangs in our drawing-room. Close to it is a letter signed by Arthur Bigge, acknowledging King George's acceptance, with his best thanks, of a copy of my book *An Admiral's Yarns*. My brother officers were not so lucky, for a horror-stricken official stopped them ; however, some of them came off

with me and I presented each with a small portion. Nothing like being first in the field !

Thus the Navy paid its last tribute to the Queen who reigned longer than any other ruler in our history, and whose reign was one of unexampled prosperity, during which the nation made enormous strides in science, invention and arts, the like of which no other century has seen. It was not to be expected that such a long reign would pass without wars and rumours of wars, but the latter very much predominated. The Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny and the Boer War were the only serious campaigns we were involved in, and they would be considered sideshows at the present time. Most of the other affairs were in the nature of expeditions ; even the Egyptian Campaign was not much more. The close of the reign found the Empire more consolidated than it had ever been. The Boer War and the offers of aid from the Dominions proved that, and the Queen became the first Empress of India. It was an era of happiness and prosperity for the great majority. People ask, " Were there ever any good old times? " To which I reply, " Yes, up to August, 1914, when Germany commenced to do her best to wreck the world." At the present time it is almost impossible to say whether she has succeeded or not.

It is a moot question as to what we were tending to when the Great War crashed on us. I leave that to abler brains than mine ; I have my own ideas though. There is also the problem as to whether the war came to save civilization or destroy it, as has happened in the past history of the world. In the former alternative, which I devoutly hope for, it seems to me that a long period and a resolute pilot is required to steer us safely into port. As regards Great Britain, I believe that no nation is at heart so thoroughly loyal ; we want a little more general patriotism instead of selfish individuality. In other words, less Hedonism and more Altruism. But if the debacle *does* come, I feel that we shall hold out longer than any other nation against it.

The most glorious and beneficial reigns in our island history occurred under Queens. Had I not been a Victorian, I would have liked to have been an Elizabethan sailor. Good Queen Bess—perhaps not wholly disinterestedly—encouraged her seamen in their various enterprises ; Drake and Raleigh are the best examples.

Although we had a Royal Navy before her time, it began to assume a more national and unique form under her. They were seamen in the strict sense too ; now we are more 'Men of the Sea,' although all come under the general category of sailors. Up to quite recent days seamen had a great deal in common. For example, any officer of my earlier service could have handled an Elizabethan ship and—take out the funnel, close the engine-room and unship the screw—no doubt with a little practice the converse holds good. But put the Elizabethans into a steamship, and they would be 'All at Sea,' just as much as the sailors of King George would be in a fully masted steam frigate. It is a lost art to them. But the Victorian is adaptable to *either* period, all of which goes to prove that he is the connecting link. Although it was not our good fortune to share in the exploits of the Navy during the late war, we felt overwhelming pride at their triumphs, and rejoiced to think that we had been succeeded by such splendid sons of the sea, and also were glad to remind ourselves that we had helped to train them.

And now back to Queenstown, whence we had proceeded after my leave. Lake and his Flag-Lieutenant, Henry Cochrane, were now relieved by Rear-Admiral Jeffries and Viscount Kelburne. We bade adieu to the former and Mrs. Lake with great regret ; we had all been very happy together. Kelburne only stayed until October, when he left for more active service, and his place was taken by Harold Sulivan ; each was an acquisition to Queenstown, and deservedly popular.

Another cruise, and this time we visited the Scilly Isles, a most interesting collection of islands. On this occasion we moored in Crow Sound, on a future one off St. Mary's, the former anchorage being a bad one on account of the rocky bottom. The daffodils were in full bloom. Yet another cruise in August, when we visited all the most important seaside resorts on the South Coast of England, and the trippers and taxpayers had a chance of seeing how some of their money was spent —a chance that numbers availed themselves of—and the ships were crowded with visitors. This time we finished with a sham battle with the Channel Fleet, under Sir Arthur Wilson, V.C., known in the Service as 'Tug Wilson.' It took place off the Lizard ; the Channel Fleet came up from the Eastward and the Home Fleet

from the Westward, the former in line-ahead, a formation it preserved during the whole of the mimic combat. We approached in subdivisions, and on nearing the pseudo-enemy got into line also ; we were at the time in easy range, but our adversary chivalrously refrained from opening fire. Then both sides went at it (the distance was a few thousand yards, and it makes one smile to think of it in view of late experiences) and we blazed away for some time ; rather a fine sight ; then we got into subdivisions again and Gerry began manœuvring. He had a favourite 'Alter course by Subdivisions,' at which we had been practising, and now was the opportunity for it! The factor of time entered into it, each subdivision altering course after the expiration of a certain number of minutes. It was rather a complicated affair, the result being that, while the Channel Fleet followed a steady course and had a good line of direction for their guns, we were twisting and turning like Morris Dancers, and the guns never steady on their targets ; it must have looked very pretty though. Finally our Fleet got a trifle mixed up and the Channel Fleet drew off, feeling, no doubt (with reason), that they had scored a glorious victory. I think that the lesson we learnt was that fancy work in the face of an enemy is undesirable, to put it mildly.

Two days after this bloodless affair we were back in Queenstown, and were honoured by a visit from the Duke of Connaught, who arrived in the *Melampus* (Captain Hart-Dyke) ; he had come from Kingston on a tour of inspection. H.R.H. is so well known that I need not say more than that he attracted all of us by his charming manner. He lunched with the Admiral, a function at which as one of the Staff I attended. In December of that year (1901) he paid us another visit, this time accompanied by the Duchess and the Princesses Margaret and Patricia. The party lunched at Admiralty House, and I had the honour of sitting next to Princess Margaret. Her charming and unaffected manner completely captivated me.

Hart-Dyke was an old friend of mine and an interesting companion. He had a marvellous memory as regards Service dates and occurrences, in fact he was a walking naval encyclopædia, a sort of Naval 'Dato.' After his retirement he lived at Banbury, and we kept up our friendship until his death just before the war.

Late in 1901 we received orders to go to Plymouth and turn over to the *Empress of India*; this gave us great satisfaction, and we did not waste time. It was a great change from the obsolete *Howe* to the comparatively modern *Empress,* although she had passed her first bloom. From 10,000 tons to 14,000 and a complement of 780 was a great advance, and when it came to sea-going qualities the advance was still more marked. It was like changing from a duck-punt to a Captain's galley. Handling the *Empress* after the *Howe* was a delight. In a head-sea the fore part of the *Howe* would be submerged most of the time, while the higher freeboard of the *Empress* enabled her to ride triumphantly over anything but a very bad sea.

During the time the ship was at Plymouth I went for a short leave to the gay metropolis and got inoculated with bridge, then coming (or come) into fashion. The officers used to come to my cabin after dinner for whist, and on my return we started bridge, and introduced it into Queenstown. I bade farewell to whist with much regret and still think that there is more in it. But we had to accept the inevitable and swallow in succession all the future improvements (?) without demur. I wonder if we shall ever reach finality. I find my whist memory very useful.

When we next went out, in January, 1902, we went to the Channel Islands, and at Jersey were selected to conduct a coaling experiment at sea from an attendant collier. We steamed at a moderate speed, with the collier in tow, and an endless overhead wire between us on which the bags ran on rollers. In this way we took in about forty tons an hour; not good enough, but it demonstrated that it could be done. It was evident that it was not a very satisfactory method except on an emergency; moreover, the ships had to keep under way, and were burning coal all the time.

On the conclusion of this trip we went to Plymouth to have the wireless installed. It was estimated that it would take several weeks, and the Admiral became unhappy at the idea of being deprived of his flagship. In response to his representations the Admiralty directed me to temporarily commission the *Thames* (a second-class cruiser), with the requisite number of officers and men from the *Empress,* and take her over to Queenstown to act as the Flagship until the *Empress* was ready.

Accordingly I turned over to her with three hundred officers and men, leaving the remainder with Moubray. At first we thought it rather a good scheme, but that did not last very long, for we had only been in harbour fourteen days when a telegram ordered us to proceed to Glasgow at once, adding that we were destined to take part in a search for a missing steamer of the Allan Line. I got the order in the evening, and soon after midnight slipped and proceeded out of harbour, arriving at Greenock the following evening. We were none of us very elated over this job, and I think Philip Watson, the First-Lieutenant, was most to be pitied, as he had been expending time and money on the old craft in making her look smart—she had got rather shop-worn in the reserve—and it was all wasted.

Mr. Allan and the Superintendent came down from Glasgow, and we learnt that the ship in question was the *Huronian*. She was long overdue, in fact there was very little doubt that the unfortunate ship was lost with all hands. An interested M.P. had asked whether a war-ship had been detailed to search for her, and our despatch was the result. The area allotted to us was between Iceland and the North Coast of Ireland, and in view of the climatic conditions I applied to the Admiralty for extra warm clothing for the men. In response a special train arrived from Deptford with the necessary garments, and having coaled, we left immediately on a quest that we feared would not be crowned with success. The Admiralty sent a track chart of the courses we were to follow, and we commenced by starting from that remarkable islet, Rockall, a dangerous rock that rises sheer out of sea distant about 180 miles West of the Hebrides. We kept up a speed of fifteen knots the whole time.

I believe the Authorities had an idea that these waters were deserted ; if so, I disillusioned them, for on our first return I sent in a track chart with the positions of all the ships we had sighted, from a full-powered liner and a barque down to steam trawlers and schooners ; no ship in distress would have had to wait long for assistance. But orders are orders, and we filled up again and went on our way once more until we had completed the pretty design that the Hydrographic Office had sent us, then we made a burst for Queenstown, getting back by the 11th of May, the only variation

to the monotony of the trip being the sails we had sighted and the magnificent scenery of the Scottish coast.

This cruise was one of my worst experiences of continued bad weather. It was very cold and it blew and rained hard nearly all the time. The *Thames* was, to put it mildly, very lively ; she was a box of guns, had a low freeboard and the seas slopped in continually. My orders to the officers were to pick up everything they saw ; all lookouts were doubled, and directly anything was sighted the engines were put full speed astern and two lifeboats lowered. In this way we collected all sorts of junk, flotsam and jetsam of the sea, from empty barrels, buoys, planks, etc., to bottles ; the latter we examined with breathless anticipation, but we never got a message from the sea. I got quite accustomed to being shaken up at night by the above evolution, but in the daytime it provided excitement. We had the band on board, which was a great solace, and it played twice a day.

On the eve of our second departure Messrs. Allan sent me off three cases of Perrier and Jouet. I sent two to the wardroom, and for some time I heard orders for a bottle of 'Allan Water.' There is not much doubt in my mind that the unfortunate *Huronian* rammed an iceberg, but she added another to the list of the mysteries of the sea.

During our stay at Greenock I saw something of the shipbuilding industry through the courtesy of Messrs. Scott, and I spent a day with one of the firm, leaving very much impressed. I also visited Glasgow with some officers, and we were entertained at lunch at the Yacht Club by the Allans, who did their best to express their sympathy with us on the inconvenience we were put to.

The climate of Ireland was a relief after our late experience, but it knows how to rain there ; no wonder the grass is so green! There is a tradition that it never freezes ; it certainly did not during our three years. Another legend says there are no snakes ; all I can say is that I did see one—perhaps it was a pet that had escaped!

On the 20th of May my wife and I went to London. It was the right time to be there ; one was sure to meet plenty of friends and relations. It seems different now, and is no longer the London we knew, *autres temps autres mœurs*. On return I took the *Thames* back to

Plymouth, rejoined the *Empress*, and on the 20th of June joined the Home Fleet at Portland, where it was assembling for the coronation review on the 26th. It will be recalled that this had to be postponed at the eleventh hour owing to the King being attacked by appendicitis, to the great alarm of the nation.

Instead of festivities we had a cruise and visited some ports in Scotland, finishing off by the end of July. The 7th of August found us all back again at Spithead for the postponed review. The postponement rather suited me, for on the first occasion an Admiral had been directed to hoist his flag in the *Empress* for the review, and I should have had to turn out of his cabins and go into my own. It was very inopportune too, for I had invited a party on board for the day ; the Admiral had been very nice about it and said that he would be very glad to see me and my wife at lunch, but he had said nothing about my friends. The postponement settled all that, and on the second occasion the Admiralty left us as a private ship, so, with the officers, we entertained about 120 people, and used my fore-cabin (a very large one) and the wardroom for that purpose.

The King was crowned on the 9th, and on the day previous two tickets for the ceremony in Westminster Abbey were allotted to each Captain. I declined mine because my wife had decided not to cross over a second time and was giving a dinner party in honour of the event. It was a disappointment to both of us, for it was a magnificent and unique ceremony.

The review was held on the 16th, and the weather was propitious until nightfall, when it rained heavily, but it did not prevent a multitude of people from turning out to witness the illumination of the Fleet, which was a fine sight, some of the designs being very artistic.

The King passed down the lines in the *Victoria and Albert*, and then the yacht anchored in the middle of the Fleet. During the afternoon His Majesty signalled for all Admirals and Captains to repair on board, and presented us all with coronation medals. His Majesty looked every inch a King, as he always did, and seemed in excellent spirits. I stood for a long time close to Queen Alexandra, and had an opportunity of studying her closely. She was dressed in her usual faultless style and looked radiantly happy.

An August 18th the Fleet weighed and in two lines passed before the King, who had taken up a position in the Royal Yacht close to the Nab Lightship. The long and formidable procession steamed past rapidly with ships manned, men cheering and bands playing. There was no hitch anywhere; everything went off according to schedule, and the Admirals must have patted each other on the back. After the last ship had passed the King made the signal 'Magnificent spectacle, splendid order kept.' On all these occasions he wore the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet, which became him immensely, and at the review, mindful of his rôle, he signalled 'Splice the main-brace.' A good instance of his thoughtfulness for others.

The Channel Fleet then parted company and we returned to Queenstown. We experienced great benefit from our new toy, the wireless, and coming over from England I was able to send my wife a message when we were a hundred miles off that I should be home to dinner. Some convenience!

About this time the Admiralty and Army Council issued instructions that R.A. Officers were to be invited out to witness our target practice. A party went out with us and showed great interest, all of it being in the turrets during the firing except the Colonel, who preferred the bridge. He had been a Horse Gunner, and was more interested in horses. However, he woke up when we anchored; the prodigious splash made by our five-ton anchor astonished and delighted him, so much so that I offered to let go the other one. With much consideration he declined.

On September 9th I was hastily summoned home; my father had been knocked down by a bicycle and died in a few hours without regaining consciousness. He was eighty-four years of age, and had for a long time retired from business. He and my mother had lived alone at Chiswick. My mother now went to live with my eldest brother, who had retired from the Indian Civil Service and taken a house at Ealing, a place much affected by Anglo-Indians. Here she spent the remainder of her days, dying at the age of eighty-four also. Their bodies lie in the same grave at Chiswick Church, of which the Rector was the Reverend Lawford Dale, an old friend of our family, and under whom my brother Ferdinand served as Curate for many years. No man had ever more

devoted parents. My father in his old age occupied his time with literary and philanthropic works. My mother remained simple and countryfied to the last. She was a skilled illuminator, and among other works produced a beautiful 'Te Deum,' of which only a limited number of copies was printed. Her Majesty Queen Victoria was graciously pleased to accept one and sent my mother a gold Maltese Cross as a mark of her appreciation; this very much delighted her, and she became a more staunch Victorian than ever. My parents left many attached friends to mourn them.

I had to hurry back, for yet another change in the organization of the Home Fleet entailed the withdrawal of the *Empress* from Queenstown. I took her to Plymouth and turned her over to Burney, now Admiral of the Fleet, Sir Cecil Burney, Bart. Then I commissioned the *Eolus*, a second-class cruiser, and returned to Queenstown. My cruising days were over and I settled down as Flag-Captain to do my duty in the state to which the Admiralty had called me.

In October we were visited by the Viceroy and Lady Dudley. The former, with his Staff, arrived in H.M.S. *Juno*, Captain David Beatty (whom I met for the first time); he had already made his mark. He looked like a man who would take his chance, and he has done so. I had met his wife at dinner on the *Hyacinth* (Captain Douglas Gamble, a cheery, hospitable man, renowned for his entertainments; nothing less than a French *chef* would do for *him*). I accompanied the Admiral to welcome the Vice-Regal party, and attended subsequent entertainments at Admiralty House that were graced by various notabilities such as Lord and Lady Bandon, Lord Plunkett, and the Honorary Horace Plunkett. Lord and Lady Dudley were a most representative couple.

1903 arrived, and in the middle of January my successor was appointed; once more it was Captain Greet. I turned things over gladly, for it was hard to interest oneself in a ship like the *Eolus* in which I did not go to sea. We had the house on our hands until March, and remained in it. On the day we began to pack up I was appointed to a War Course at Greenwich. Hurrying over our farewells, we arrived in London on March 17, 1903. This last tour of service had been very pleasant, so many of my brother officers were old friends and messmates. Among them were 'Uncle Bill' (F. W.

Fisher), Dick Gresley, J. E. C. Goodrich (a classmate), Dick White and G. A. Primrose (who was a Sub with me in the *Monarch*). "I count myself in nothing else so happy, as in a soul rememb'ring my good friends."

CHAPTER XVIII

COASTGUARD AND RETIREMENT

When in the storm on Albion's coast,
The night-watch guards his wary post
From thoughts of danger free;
He marks some vessel's dusky form,
And hears amid the howling storm
The minute gun at sea.

ON March 18, 1903, I went to Greenwich—like Tennyson's sailor boy, 'Flushed with Hope.' The war course was an advance in the art of studying war, and I expected to learn something of that art. I may as well confess that I 'Came out by the same door through which I Went in.' The class consisted of about a dozen officers, divided into two parties, and engaged with two mimic fleets in hostilities. At my arrival they had got into an impasse, the senior officer of the Red Fleet having manœuvred into such a position that his next move meant defeat, so he obstinately refused to make that move. Soon the Easter vacation commenced, and I received an offer of an appointment, which I accepted and withdrew, leaving the Blue Fleet still dominant. My companions were all agreeable men. One of them was Captain Sir R. K. Arbuthnot, Bart., who as a Rear-Admiral was killed at Jutland in the *Defence*, that blew up while he was leading his division at the enemy. He had not recovered from a bad accident caused by the breech-block of a gun blowing out, some of the gun's crew being killed.

My appointment was as District Captain to the Western District of Coastguard and Naval Reserves, to reside at Liverpool. My district embraced the whole of the West Coast of England and Wales, from Tors Point, N.B., round Land's End to Yealm (near Plymouth), hundreds of miles. It included the Isle of Man, Anglesey, and the Scilly Isles, and was divided into nine divisions, under four Com-

manders, five Lieutenants, and forty-five chief officers in charge of stations and batteries. A Cruiser, the *Spartan*; two Gunboats, the *Antelope* and *Circe*; and two Drill Ships, the *Dædalus* at Bristol, with the *Eagle* at Liverpool, completed the division.

I arrived at Liverpool on the 21st of May, and my wife and I put up at the North-Western Hotel and started house hunting, and soon got one to our liking. It rejoiced in the name of 'Olive Vale,' and was situated in Wavertree Nook, quite romantic. It was in a charming oasis with a walled garden, and picturesquely built. Our son was now at Clifton College, where he had won an exhibition, and his chum was Hal Stockley, whose father was born in Olive Vale, a curious coincidence. We got to know Arthur and Eleanor Stockley, his parents, and they are among our best and dearest friends. He is the head of the firm of Elders and Fyffes, and is mainly responsible for its conception. I have been out to the West Indies three times with him in their fine steamers, of which they had twenty-two before the war; eleven were lost during that time. All Stockley's friends will agree with me that he is an excellent companion, a generous and good friend. The firm's headquarters are at 31, Bow Street. Many a festive lunch have I had there. Once, as I was leaving my club, I was met by a brother officer who inquired where I was off to; I answered (putting on a lugubrious air), "Bow Street." He looked very sympathetic. I felt certain that he would go into the smoking-room and say to our mutual friends, 'I wonder what old Fleet had been up to; he has just gone off to Bow Street, and he looked awfully down in the mouth.' But I never left those premises feeling like that, for more convivial and amusing men are hard to meet. Hal Stockley, a lad of spirit, volunteered when the war broke out, and got a commission in the 3rd battalion of the Leicestershire Regiment, joining it in the trenches; he was twice severely wounded, won the Military Cross, and finished as Adjutant of his battalion.

We found some of our friends of the King's Regiment at Liverpool, and got a cordial welcome, and before long met a well-known resident, Arthur Earle, of Childwall, who lived close to us: to know him was a sure way of knowing as many people as we wanted to. An old messmate of mine, Commander the Hon. H. A. S. Stanhope, was in command of the *Dædalus*, and his friends promptly

called on us. The time came for me to begin my rounds, and on July 16th I started off to Carlisle ; thence I went to Maryport and worked down the coast of Cumberland and Lancashire back to Liverpool, very much enjoying the scenery of the Falls, the interesting city of Carlisle and the coast line.

This inspecting duty was very agreeable, and being my own master, I was able to proceed leisurely. Having determined the particular division I intended to inspect, it only remained to write to the officer in charge, direct him to arrange an itinerary and transport and meet me on a given date.

I do not propose to ask my readers to accompany me all round these hundreds of miles ; no doubt had he been seated with me in a comfortable landau, my usual conveyance, he would have extracted the same amount of pleasure and interest as I did. The carriage might be trundling along the road near the coast, and suddenly turn off toward the sea, plunging into a cleft in which was tucked away a charming little village like Clovelly, where everything was quaintly fascinating, and the arrival of the Inspecting Captain produced quite a sensation. Or you might be driving through a town such as Ilfracombe, and come across the station apparently in the heart of it, where your arrival excited little interest. Or the station might be tucked away at the foot of a cliff, or even boldly exposed on the summit.

The carriage rolls up, the station officer appears, and the men are seen drawn up under arms. After inspecting them an adjournment was made to the watch-house, and they were examined on various subjects, such as how to resuscitate an apparently drowned man, signalling, and inspection of kits. The men were then dismissed to their houses and the books gone through, the final ceremony being the inspection of the houses, where the wives and children awaited one, the latter always kept at home for the Captain to see, and very bonny children they almost invariably were. Of all the five hundred houses I inspected there was scarcely one that was not clean and tidy. The children too were the same. I have more than a suspicion that the men did a great deal of the household work and the women had more leisure to look after the children.

To the civilian the Coastguardman is a man in a bluejacket's kit, who strolls about (with a glass under his

arm) on the beach at a seaside place. But to the Navy he is an important reserve that can be drawn upon in an emergency. To the maritime world he is a guardian ever on watch. No matter what the weather, the coast is patrolled by these men. The little path along the cliff to the trysting place where he meets the man from the next station is worn by his foot, and no ship can get into danger without the coastguard being aware of it and calling out the lifeboat. Warmly clothed, he faces the fiercest gales, his keen eyes ever alert, and his 'Tuckstick' in his hand, ready to telephone from the nearest station or to burn blue lights. The 'Tuckstick' is a relic of the smuggling days (and resembles a swordstick, in that a blade is hidden in it), that was used for piercing suspected packages which might contain smuggled articles.

After praising the women for the spotless condition of their houses and rosy-faced children, the Inspecting Captain departed to the next station, with a word of praise to the chief officer. Several times some words from Ben Bolt occurred to me; how Alice 'Blushed with delight when he gave her a smile and trembled at his Frown.' Put the station officer in Alice's place and substitute the Captain for Ben Bolt, and there you have it. Of course they always knew that you were coming; telephones and telegraphs cannot be muzzled. Once, when motoring, I short-circuited a station and arrived unexpectedly at the next. After a time a telegram was put into my hand marked 'Navy'; as senior officer I opened it. It ran, "Look out, the Inspecting Captain has just passed through." I handed it to the station officer, who did not enjoy it as much as I did.

Motors were then a rarity, and the only place where one was procurable was Llanelly. The car was a Darracq of the earliest date. The hills in Wales are fierce, and once we had to be ignominiously hauled up one by a pair of horses. On my very last trip it broke down utterly, and we had to abandon it. Luckily, we only had to walk a couple of miles to the station of Conwyl, whence we took train to Carmarthen. But with bags to carry, those two miles seemed like twenty before we were through. I had Hugh Wyatt, who married my cousin, Agnes Fleet, with me, and I don't think he enjoyed carrying his bag any more than I did.

An accident, that might have been accompanied by disaster, occurred while I was driving from Portreath to

Gwythian, on the East side of St. Ives Bay. Coming down the hill we noticed a sandstorm blowing across the road, which here skirted the beach ; we plunged into it, and the carriage came to a dead stop. Looking out of the window, all I could distinguish was the driver on his knees. "Great Scott!" I exclaimed, "he's saying his prayers!" Then I noticed the horses had disappeared, and we discovered that the shock had broken the pole, and the frightened animals had snapped the traces and gone off, pulling the driver off the box. I sent my companion off to the coastguard station, which was luckily not very far off, and some of the men came for our bags, and we reached Gwythian, passing on the way one of the horses lying in a field, stone dead. The poor thing had bolted right on to the shafts of a butcher's cart in the village ; the other returned the whole of the way to Bodmin, about sixteen miles. After the inspection I hired the only available transport in the village, a cart driven by a woman, and we got to Gwinnear Road, picking up a train for Plymouth. We sat on a board with a good lady, and, among other queries, I put to her the time-honoured one about St. Ives and the man with seven wives. She had never heard of this old catch, although born and bred in the vicinity. I was provided with a book of passes available on any railway, and I had a good subsistence allowance that covered everything except extras, tips and luxuries. They went into things very carefully, for once I was asked why I had not taken the coach from Minehead to Ilfracombe instead of a landau. There was no lemon to this answer. In the first place there were Lynmouth and Combe Martin to be inspected, and the coach was not likely to wait for me. Secondly, the outside of a coach full up with people going to and from market was not the place for a Captain on duty in uniform and trimmings. I heard no more from the zealous clerk who found this mare's nest. Travelling in uniform was not so universal as it now is, and one felt the cynosure of all eyes, doubtless pure imagination. It *did* lead to awkward moments, such as happened at Bangor, when a lady took me for the stationmaster and asked me to have her luggage labelled. I kept up the illusion (she was young and not uncomely), and calling a porter, gave him the order in a most stationmasterish voice, and was rewarded with a sweet smile from the lady. But I don't know why she imagined that a stationmaster was entitled

to wear a sword and a few modest decorations, that again were not so universal in those days. But I felt a warm glow after that smile. Virtue is its own reward, but the most virtuous of us like it supplemented.

About this time my cousin, Sir Edward Alford, who had come home from China, took Riseley Hall, in Yorkshire, for the summer, and invited us to visit him. It gave us a chance of seeing York and Ripon Cathedrals. I have a penchant for Cathedrals, and have seen most of our English ones. They knew how to build in those days.

And we spent a day at Fountain's Abbey. What a glorious pile, even in ruin! How could our ancestors let these places decay. Here in Reading, where we have pitched our tent until "The dark Ferash strikes and prepares it for another guest," the only remains of the Abbey are a few walls. The rest has gone to build Sonning Bridge, cottages in the vicinity, and—shade of Macadam—mend the roads. They were certainly utilitarians in those days!

On our return I had to go to Barrow to attend the launching of the *Dominion* by Princess Louise. Those who have attended such a ceremony have doubtless remarked what an extraordinary sight it is when the ship glides off the ways and discloses a large vacant space, until then obscured by her bulk. Instead of her towering mass, we see thousands of people, lining the sides of the slipway, until then concealed from the view of the élite assembled at the bow. The effect is most curious. Just before the ceremony I was startled by the Princess turning to me and requesting me to tell a girl not to photograph her. I spotted the delinquent, and in my best manner invited the fair offender to desist, which of course she promptly did. After the ceremony the élite lunched in the model room, and we were honoured by the presence of H.R.H. This affair was in August, and in the following November the Princess came to Liverpool to lay a foundation stone. I was again present, and this time my wife was invited, and the Princess commanded me to present her. The Royal Family possess an extraordinary faculty of recalling people that they have met, if only once. The Lord Mayor entertained us in the Town Hall, and the Princess was present. She very much impressed us with her charm of manner.

I soon discovered that my headquarters should have

been at Bristol. Liverpool was too far North. My usual course was to go to some central place and start from there, such as Exeter, Tenby, Plymouth, Falmouth or Penzance, where one could put in a day or two most pleasantly, notably Plymouth, where I had still many friends, and where I put up at the Yacht Club on the Hoe. The last letter I wrote on service was to advice the removal of the office to Bristol, and it was eventually done.

Winter was coming on, so we gave ourselves over to the festivities provided by our good friends. Dinners were a great feature. Perhaps I should be nearer the truth if I called them banquets ; as it was we called them 'Belshazzar's Feasts.' The art of dining was certainly understood by the hospitable Liverpudlians, and thoroughly appreciated by us, as were the capital balls at the Wellington Rooms and the Philharmonic Concerts.

I next went to the Isle of Man in the *Spartan* (Captain A. W. Heneage, now an Admiral). We used to see a good deal of this agreeable and capable officer. I made my headquarters at Douglas, and visited Peel, Castletown and Ramsey in turn. Most of my readers are familiar with this island (if they have not visited it) by reading Hall Caine's books. At Peel there is a justifiable air of antiquity. Here the R.N.R. battery was manned entirely by fishermen of the island, a fine healthy body of men. The following year I stayed with friends, Charles Callow and his wife. Callow was at that time Vicar-General, and soon after became one of the two Deemsters. We first met these warm-hearted people at Liverpool, and hearing that I was about to visit the island, they insisted on my staying with them at their place, near Douglas, and bringing my wife. They made our visit very agreeable, and introduced us to all the many objects of interest with which the isle abounds. Since my retirement we have twice visited them, and one of our visits coincided with the time of the ceremony at the Tynwald Mound. It was attended by the Governor (Lord Raglan), the Deemsters, the Bishop of Sodor and Man, the Speaker, the House of Keys, and other officials. The ceremony commenced in the church of St. John's, near the mound, the latter being formerly the seat of the Supreme Court, now held in Douglas. It opened with a short service by the Bishop, after which a procession was formed, headed by the Governor, that marched to

the mound, which is constructed of earth brought from all the parishes. The various Acts passed during the previous year were then read in Manx, a dialect of the Celtic and almost extinct. I regret to say that I disgraced myself during this part of the ceremony. The Manx language apparently does not contain words for all commodities, and amidst a flow of unknown and quaintly sounding words, to hear these commonplace articles interpolated suddenly was too much for my gravity, and I exploded with laughter. Unfortunately I stood in front of the mound, plainly visible to all the authorities, and had they not also been possessed with a sense of humour (or politeness) it is possible that I might have been put in irons and confined in the deepest dungeon beneath the castle moat ; as it was, I was treated with undeserved clemency. But, I ask you (after listening to a succession of extraordinary words that sounded as if they had been invented for the occasion), what would have happened to you when you heard something like this : "Je yn balley bee eh doonit son creck my chur, fried fish and chipped potatoes, eh son veg ny er aght," if you had not laughed? After the ceremony we returned to the church, where the first sitting of the House of Keys was held.

For the Scilly Isles I embarked in the *Spartan* at Penzance, and put up at the 'Tregarthen' on St. Mary's Isle ; after visiting the stations the *Spartan* landed me at Falmouth.

On my return to Liverpool I got a very nice letter from T. A. Dorrien-Smith, the owner of the islands (generally alluded to as the King of the Scillies), inviting me to put up at Tresco Abbey on any future occasion, and regretting his absence during my visit. I had met him at Portsmouth with Lord Chesham. They were both former officers of the 10th Hussars, and came down to welcome that crack regiment home from India. I was in the *Serapis*, and C. R. Wood (Lieut. R.N., whose brother commanded the regiment) brought them on board to have lunch with me while waiting for the Trooper to come up harbour. I met Chesham several times afterwards, but had not seen Dorrien-Smith again. At my next visit I crossed over in the *Circe*, went to Tresco Abbey, and remained in that charming place until my inspections were completed. There was a houseful of visitors, and our host and his daughters made the time pass most pleasantly. The late Sir Charles Dilke was

there in a yacht, and I had an opportunity of conversing with this remarkably well-informed man, most of it being with regard to the Navy, with which he seemed to be very familiar. The islands, from the seaman's point of view, are most dangerous, but the region has many lighthouses. Coming over from Ireland in the *Empress* on a fine night was like driving down a well-lit street. The last time we crossed it was so thick that we could not pick up any light at all. Suddenly we found ourselves right under Pendeen, and I have often shuddered to think how close we passed those two pinnacle rocks, the Brissons. The collection of figureheads on the grounds at Tresco Abbey testify to the dangers of the islands. Admiral A. H. Smith-Dorrien, brother of the above, is, I am glad to say, one of my friends. When we went out in the *Arcadia* he joined at the last moment at Tilbury in full hunting kit ; he had been out, and had no time to change. As it was, he very nearly missed his passage to China, whither he was going to take command of the *Alacrity*.

To get to my office trams were available. The conversations one overheard were sometimes interesting, sometimes amusing. It is extraordinary how certain people *will* air their opinions in public. Do they think that we others are deaf? I have also noticed the same trait when travelling by rail, when people discuss their private affairs with appalling frankness, or as an alternative make a hearty meal of some sort.

Two women in the tram at Liverpool were criticizing the city and its inhabitants with the usual freedom ; it was evident that they were from the Emerald Isle. Liverpool's most fashionable street is Bold Street, and one was decrying it to the other, comparing it most unfavourably to Sackville Street. The other agreed with her, and clinched the matter by saying, "Bold Street! There's nivver anny of the Quality there! Now ye cannot walk down Sackville Street without meeting some of the *Noblesse Oblige*."

Another time a female got in with a basket of fish, and it soon became apparent that they ought to be buried as soon as possible ; perhaps she was on her way to do so, but she might have done it at home. A drunken man got in and we prepared for trouble, but he proved to be a friend, for he sat down next to the female, and after giving a few sniffs that apparently sobered him, seized the basket and hove it out of the tram. Uttering a fearsome

yell, the woman dashed after it, and we saw her no more. We endured the drunken man with equanimity after that.

Another incident happened in connection with my parson brother while visiting us. An honest working man in the filthiest of clothes sat down next to him, and he instinctively edged away. The man glared: "I suppose I'm not good enough to sit alongside the likes of you?" "Not at all, my friend," replied my brother. "It's not you I object to, but your clothes. Suppose I had them on and you had mine, do you think you would like it?" The argument appealed to the H.W.M., and his features relaxed into a grim smile as he rejoined, "Well, come to think of it, Guv'nor, I carn't say as I should." It's sometimes great to be a parson!

I have referred to the many delightful places one had to visit, especially some little known by the public. An example of this ignorance—in my case—is St. David's Cathedral, in the village of that name, the nearest railway station being Haverfordwest, distant sixteen miles. I believe that, except by the Welsh, it is very little known. As we approached the village a beautiful old cross came in view, and behind it a massive tower, apparently growing out of the ground; it was the tower of the Cathedral, that stands in a valley on the banks of the little river Alan. I went and explored it. The present structure is the fourth in sequence, the first dating from the sixth and the last from the twelfth century. St. David is responsible for the earliest. Outside it is plain; there is some ornamentation inside, but the general impression is one of bareness. A peculiarity is that the floor slopes downwards from East to West as much as two feet in three hundred, an effect plainly visible. It became rather ruinous, but was taken in hand about the middle of the last century, and a great deal in the way of restoration has been done through the piety of several enthusiasts, but, like the curate's egg, it is bad in parts still. Close by is the Bishop's palace, in ruins; it must have been a handsome building, and still possesses a fine rose window.

A lovely drive is from Minehead across Exmoor, through Porlock to Ilfracombe via Lynton. The road for some distance runs along the summit of an inaccessible cliff, and acting on the instructions of the officer with me, I got out at one place and, crawling to the extreme edge, looked down into a crevice into which a sailing ship had been wedged during a furious gale, thereby enabling

the crew to reach the shore. It was the only spot for miles where it could have occurred. Exmoor made me think of Jan Ridd and Lorna, and I tried to imagine that one of the valleys was that sacred to the Doones, up which the intrepid Jan crept and carried off the girl, as all these heroes do. But I *should* have liked to have seen the fight between Jan and Carver.

Then Bideford. My first object was to visit the room in which Kingsley wrote *Westward Ho!* The ceiling is Elizabethan and very fine. The proprietor told me that he had had many offers for it. Thence on to Hartland Quay, a lonely spot. I spent the night in a little pub built on the rocks, and lay listening to the roar of the breakers until lulled to sleep. They gave me a clean bed, but our dinner was simply a leg of mutton, for which they charged about the price of the sheep and probably lived on for a week. It was a steep climb to the watch-house on Hartland Point, but it was worth it. The grandeur and solitude of these mighty cliffs, home of the raven, chough and jackdaw, are most appalling.

One evening toward the close of a fine summer's day (this is all my own) I found myself at New Quay, Cardigan. Not fancying the accommodation, I determined to push on, and engaged a double dogcart and pair to drive me to Aberystwyth, distant twenty-five miles. The horses (and the driver) were fresh and Welsh. We conversed in a sort of mixed esperanto and dumb-crambo. It was a gorgeous evening, calm and warm; a pale moon hung o'erhead in a cloudless sky, in which the stars were twinkling (somehow I seem to have heard this before). The road ran along by the side of the seashore, upon which the waves broke with a gentle rippling murmur (I think that is about all). We passed through Llanlwch-aiarn, Llansaintffraid, Llanrhystyd and Ffoslas—to select a few places at random. I did not attempt to pronounce them, for I wished to return home without a broken jaw. The only place that we passed through that I got home on was Aberavon, which after the others has quite a simple and poetical sound. We romped through these places regardless of children and dogs, and finally dashed up at the 'Belle Vue' (still foreign nomenclature!). We had done the distance in a little over two hours. I felt like Lady Cicely in *Captain Brassbound* when I got down, "How glorious! But what an escape!"

Another pleasant tour in Cornwall included Tintagel,

with capital accommodation at King Arthur's Castle Hotel, within easy distance of the old castle, in which tradition says that the great King was born. It requires a good deal of imagination to believe this and to reconstruct it, for the remains consist of little more than foundations. Of course the hotel boasted a round table, which was supposed to be a replica of King Arthur's.

From Penzance many delightful spots were included in my rounds—the well-known Newlyn and Land's End for example. At the latter place is the Logan Stone, a peculiar freak of Nature. Many years ago a Lieutenant R.N., not content with rocking it, pushed it over. There was a great outcry, and he was made to replace it, which he did with the aid of material lent him by the Admiralty, but not with the same success that Nature had achieved, and I believe it does not rock now. I *do* know that it was not tested by me, although I ached to give it a shove.

The Lizard was another centre, and from it all the station could be worked comfortably. If anyone wants to enjoy a fresh Cornish cake, most of these little places with such odd names as Coverack, Porthoustock and Cadgwith can supply the want, and with a glass of unskimmed milk as a top dressing, you have a lunch that even an epicure need not turn up his nose at. The West-Country people are a fine class, but the Welsh did not impress me much ; they are cunning, and are none too clean. With regard to the first characteristic I heard a story that may bear repeating. A Jew died and left orders that each of his three sons was to put a five-pound note in his coffin (the ruling spirit even in death). The eldest and the second obeyed his instructions, but the third took out the two fivers and put in a cheque for £15. Some time after he was studying his passbook and, to his astonishment, found that the cheque had been presented and cashed. The undertaker was a Welshman.

While at Penzance the Boer War was still a subject of controversy ; these people were naturally strong partisans of General Buller. I often overheard heated discussions, and at one of them it was triumphantly closed by the chief disputant saying, "What was Buller [pronounced as if 'Bull' rhymed with 'Gull'] to du? He had no harses! " That clinched the matter ; there was nothing more to be said, for of course a General could not win a battle without horses.

Lastly there was Falmouth, with its extraordinary number of curio shops. Did they stock them from the Homeward Bounders that called here in happier days? Here we had the most modern and up-to-date station in the whole district. Whatever the faults of the Admiralty (and, like the War Office, they get more kicks than halfpence), when it comes to building they do it well. I generally went on to Plymouth from here, where one inhaled the familiar atmosphere of a naval port, could feel that you still belonged to the Navy, and might meet old friends at any moment, perhaps just home from the uttermost parts of the world.

On July 19, 1904, King Edward came to Liverpool to lay the foundation stone of the Cathedral. I was told off to attend at the railway station, and Harry Stanhope accompanied me. We found Lord Derby waiting to do the honours, and he presented us to His Majesty when he alighted. The King shook hands, said a few words, and we went off to the Town Hall, where he was received by the Lord Mayor, who entertained us at lunch. Lunch over, we drove in procession to the site, and after a religious ceremony the King laid the stone, truly and well. A select crowd of fortunate people were accommodated with seats on platforms and a denser crowd of less fortunate people lined the streets, and the King got an immense reception. He was embarking in the Royal Yacht at the conclusion of the function, and we had to leave before it was quite finished in order to attend at the dock. It struck me that the King looked very fatigued ; he had had a tiring day in the full dress of an Admiral of the Fleet. He strolled on board, disappeared below, and reappeared in undress, and a good fat cigar in his mouth ; he appeared to be quite recovered. Some years before I had the honour of dining with His Majesty, then Prince of Wales, at the R.N. Club, Portsmouth. He came with Prince Louis of Battenberg and Admiral Sir Harry Keppel. One of the members, C. G. Granville, a Sub, had just won notoriety (and a bet) by entering a cage of performing lions and remaining in it for ten minutes. The Prince told Battenberg to present him, and I overheard him say to Granville, "So you have been emulating Daniel." H.R.H. made a very happy speech on the Navy. Sir Harry Keppel had long retired from the Service, but often came to the club for a rubber of whist, and many I've had with him, but his luck was

very bad ; he always seemed to lose—money, but not his temper.

During my service at Liverpool we were visited by Baden-Powell and Scott of Antarctic fame. I had not seen the former since the *Serapis* days. He was as cheery and humorous as ever. The Boys' Scout movement is the finest thing for boys ever conceived. I wish it could be made compulsory. Scott was a great loss to the Service, and our country and he and his companions, especially Oates, set a noble example of devotion to duty.

Liverpool was a most impressive place. I had not lived in such a representative commercial city before, and the reflection that it was only one of the many in the Empire made one realize what Empire really stood for. To me the interest was the commerce and the docks. The great landing stage on a fine day was a popular resort ; there always seemed to be a liner coming in or going out, and a constant stream of shipping passing up and down the Mersey. As for the docks, it is not necessary to say more than that there were seven continuous miles of them, covering an area of 1,614 acres. Robert Gladstone was Chairman of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and no man was more highly esteemed. We frequently enjoyed his hospitality at Woolton Vale, where Miss Gladstone acted as hostess. But Liverpool abounds in hospitable people, and it would be impossible for me to mention more of them, it would require a separate chapter.

The ancient city of Chester was within easy reach, and we made many excursions to it. It was like another country, and generated a sort of mediæval atmosphere, as indeed all walled cities do. There are some old timbered houses that date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries still remaining. During my rambles round Liverpool I came across a memorial tablet at Hale, a neighbouring village ; it was dedicated to "John Middleton. Childe of Hale. Borne 1578. Dyde 1623. 9 foot tall." This giant is referred to by Dr. Plott in his *Natural History of Staffordshire*. He credits him as being 9 feet 3 inches in height, and a hand 17 inches long and 8½ broad. So you cannot put this down to a sailor's yarn.

Of course I went to see the Grand National. Racing always had great attraction for me, still greater if it were not for its accompaniments. The olla podrida of a race-course is not elevating, and the old saying that backing

horses is a mug's game is a true one, else how do the Bookies live? Certainly at most race meetings humanity is not seen at its best. I quite believe that the horses enjoy racing too, and one of the most engrossing features of the Grand National was to see the riderless horses finishing on their own. But what a gruelling course it is!

I was not much captivated by the Waterloo Cup. At Sheerness the hares had a sporting chance, for at intervals refuges, termed 'thurrocks,' were provided, and the hares seemed quite aware of this, doubling and working most cleverly toward them. Once when we halted for a moment, at my feet I spotted a crouching hare. Did I kick him up and call out, "See, Ho!"? I did not, and after we had moved on I looked back and saw him still 'lying perdu,' and could have sworn he had a grateful twinkle in his eye.

Perhaps my readers wonder why I don't mention golf, with Hoylake so close. I never got the complaint badly, although I played for some years. One must keep fit; bicycling, boating and Sandow did it for me. Now I walk and do bathroom exercises, and achieve the same result. I am not intolerant, and can listen patiently to enthusiasts and their golf jargon, but I prefer a gramophone. The year 1905 dawned, and my service was drawing to an end. One of my last functions was to preside at the annual dinner of the R.N.R. officers. In my speech, after eulogizing the Royal Naval Reserve, which they received with becoming gravity and in modest silence, I thought it time to wake them up a bit, and commenced to talk about the 'Brotherhood of the Sea' and the perils of the profession. I said that I agreed with the Psalmist that "They who go down to the sea in ships see the wonders of the Lord." This was received with great solemnity; probably most of them were beginning to think that I had mistaken my profession. When it had had time to sink in I went on to say that I would add a tag, namely, that "They who go down to the sea in small ships smell hell." Laughter, and all was well.

One more inspection of the Tenby District and my work was done. Tenby had a peculiar fascination for me. As a boy I had made my first trip from home to the village of Gumfreston, close by it. I stayed with a sporting parson, and he gave me my first lessons in shooting and fishing. Who forgets his first trip with such added

delights? And, moreover, the railway stopped at Pembroke, and we drove in a real coach and four, and I sat on the box next to the driver.

My work was done, and the Service had done with me. On May 1, 1905, I was automatically retired, and started to become a shellback. I handed over to my successor, and we went off to London.

Three months after my retirement I became a Rear-Admiral, and on April 30, 1910, a Vice-Admiral. For the first few months I felt like the boatswain who, after retirement, hired a boy to call him every morning at six to tell him that the Commander wanted him. The boatswain's reply was to shy a boot at his head, and to tell him to inform the Commander that he might go to Hell, after which he went to sleep again. It gives a sort of feeling of independence to realize that you are no longer under orders, but it wears off, and you begin to have a feeling of regret that you are no longer part of a great machine which continues to function as if you had never existed.

My first relaxation was to go afloat again at the invitation of Greville Earle, one of my Liverpool friends. I accompanied him in a punt from Oxford to Windsor, a rattling good trip. We spent the nights at well-known river pubs, that, if not exactly rivalling the 'Carlton' or 'Ritz,' are not temperance hotels, as the sound of revelry by night testified. The river now suffers from steam launches and motor-boats, and has got rowdy in parts. Then came the question where to settle. My retirement had caused a big drop in income. We began the game of house-hunting; visited dozens of houses and got quite expert. At last my wife saw a house in Coley Avenue, Reading, a fine avenue, and it appealed to her. We bought it, a circumstance upon which we congratulated ourselves later, and called it 'The Camber.' It is on the edge of the town, and sufficiently near the country for us to sit and listen to the nightingales. The chief charm was the avenue, but one morning—we had only been in it about six months—I came down to breakfast and heard the ring of an axe, followed by a crash. I went out, and they had commenced to cut down the trees. In a short time they all vanished and a row of formal limes stood in their place.

We spent 1905 in London, and remained until March, 1906. During that time I had the honour of presiding

at a Navy Club dinner to celebrate Lord Rodney's victory. In accordance with the privilege extended to the President, I invited Lord Lathom, whom I had known at Liverpool, to be our guest. I proposed the toast of 'Absent Members' myself, and in my peroration quoted the two last stanzas from Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Kayyam, commencing "Yon rising moon that looks for us again." After we had broke up one of the members said to me, "I say old man, did you write those verses yourself?" I had only breath enough to reply, "I wish I had!" It fell to my lot to preside once more in 1913, to celebrate the battle of St. Vincent. Lord Sandhurst, whom I had known as Governor of Bombay Presidency, was the guest. I felt that as an undistinguished officer it was rather a feather in my cap to have taken the chair twice. These dinners took place in the Whitehall Rooms, but are now held in the Hotel Victoria. I was present on July 1, 1911, when the Club entertained Admiral Togo. Other distinguished men whom I had the pleasure of meeting as our guests include Lord Kelvin, Sir David Gill, Sir Norman Lockyer, Lord Roberts, Admiral Mahan, U.S.N., and H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, to mention only a few. The late Duke of Edinburgh occasionally presided, and used to make very good speeches.

On June 14, 1921, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales was the guest of the Club, and about three hundred members attended. He charmed us all by his manner and the capital speech he made in returning thanks for the toast of his health. Spontaneous humour seemed quite natural to him, and his speech was never laboured. Commander H.R.H. the Duke of York was present as a member, and Admiral Sir Lionel Halsey presided. Before the close of the dinner he announced that the Prince had become a member of the Club.

Among other dinners that have left pleasant memories on me is an 'Aviation Dinner' at the Ladies' Lyceum Club in Piccadilly. I sat between Colonel Cody and Miss Trehawke Davies; the latter was the first woman to go up in an aeroplane. She had a penchant for doing weird things, but a voyage round the Horn in a sailing ship as stewardess, which she told me she had enjoyed, was one of the weirdest.

Berkshire is a beautiful county, but Reading is a factory town, with many of its disadvantages. We have lived in it so long now that most of our old friends have

left, but I seem to be on speaking terms with an enormous number of people, irrespective of class, religion or politics. It is better to be liked than disliked by the masses, and if one has a few intimate friends left as well, what more does one want?

I am glad to say that I never became a victim to the modern epidemic of 'What shall we do next?' And in retirement I began to indulge more in *cacoēthes scribendi*. Some of my short stories, written during service, had already been published. My efforts resulted in a volume of short stories published in 1910, under the title of *An Admiral's Yarns*, a work to which I have previously alluded. The critics were very lenient; one of them, referring to the poems at the end of the book, remarked, "We presume the Admiral meant them to be described as verses." The criticism that pleased me most was a very appreciative letter from Clark Russell, author of *The Wreck of the Grosvenor*; he also sent me a copy of his book *The Father of the Sea*. One critic referred to my style as 'Breezy.' I do not know how to define that exactly, but it *is* somehow a fact that sailors—even retired Admirals—are permitted to express themselves somewhat forcibly and emphatically at times, and are forgiven by an indulgent audience on the score of 'Breeziness.' But is it a monopoly of the sea only?

About this time I was urged to join the Navy League, and it resulted in my embarking on the formation of a boys' naval brigade. There was already one in existence at Windsor, where they had established a craft, square-rigged, on two masts. I went over and got some valuable hints from A. J. Somerville, one of the Eton Masters who ran it. I visited the West India Docks, where there were some old barges for sale, and purchased one that was towed to Reading, and with a pensioned Chief Petty Officer and a lad to assist, set to work and rigged her out as a brigantine. It employed us, with the necessary structural alterations, for four strenuous months. On Trafalgar Day, 1909, we had our opening ceremony. It was attended by a large crowd; I think most of them thought we were going to launch an ironclad. The craft was christened by Lady Rose and named the *King Alfred* after the heroic King, who was a Berkshire man. The boys were taught seamanship, boating, swimming, boxing, signalling; we tried to teach them good manners and to

inculcate self-respect. The craft was moored at the bottom of a field, and the show ran with great success until the Great War broke out. I then had other duties more pressing to attend to. The consequence was that the organization had to be closed in 1916, after seven years' existence, during which we passed 104 boys into the Royal Navy and 46 into the Army and Marines. So ended a work which I look back upon with (I hope excusable) satisfaction as having helped several young fellows to a chance of earning a pension and providing for their old age. I had the assistance of several well-known Reading men, such as Astley Maberly, Commander Millett, General Borrett, Dr. A. Roberts, F. Simonds, Arthur and Leonard Sutton, the last ever foremost when philanthropy is concerned, and whom I am glad to call one of my friends. During the existence of the *King Alfred* the boys had the honour of being inspected by Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein.

I managed to find time for a few sideshows, such as the National Service League. Once, when I was in the chair at the Town Hall, during a meeting a man kept interrupting. He said he didn't care what flag he lived under, British or German, to which I replied that "If he had no patriotism would he at least have manners and not interrupt." He did not interfere again, but in the light of following events I am of opinion that he was a German spy. People would not listen to Lord Roberts and other old officers, we all know with what results, for had Great Britain adopted universal service there would have been no world war and millions of the best and finest of young men would be alive now. Thank God there are still many with us who have been spared. I remember, before the war, a General Officer in the club saying to me that "The young men of the present day have more morals and less manners than we had." I thought that he was right, but now I feel in doubt about the morals, especially when I read the divorce cases—when I can stand them. Again, not long ago, a lady said in my presence, "The girls of to-day are not so staid as we were." I could not resist the reply, "Isn't that because they have given up wearing corsets?" You will find a hidden jest in it if you try hard. But it is hardly a subject to joke about.

Then I was invited to stand for the Town Council. I declined, but later accepted an invitation to become

a member of the Public Library Committee. Our library is worthy of better accommodation than at present allotted to it in the Town Hall. Of all hideous erections, the most hideous. I wonder what possessed the City Fathers of the past to erect such a monstrosity.

I have been roped in by the local branch of the R.S.P.C.A., the very energetic and capable Secretary, Mrs. Robie Uniacke, assuring me that I need not be more than a figurehead. But I have my doubts, for at the time of writing, the Secretary and I have been served with a writ by the Manager of a music-hall on account of a resolution forwarded by our committee protesting against animals performing on the stage. Can I plead the 'First Offenders Act,' or must I go to prison?

I also played a part in the game of politics. Just before the General Election of January, 1910, I was asked to give my support to the Conservative candidate, Major Renton. I had never taken any part in an election or even voted at one, and was entirely ignorant of the political game. I had to ask my wife what I was. She said Conservative, so the answer was in the affirmative. The result was that I accompanied the prospective candidate on his polling trips and made several speeches. But I believe that these meetings are mostly attended by people desirous of a night out, with fixed opinions and half the time bored to death. When it was all over we were only beaten by the narrow margin of 207, and that by Rufus Isaacs. But I said to myself, like Poë's Raven, 'Nevermore.' Most of the helpers had axes to grind. One of them actually asked me what I expected to get out of it. After I had finished with that gentleman I think he felt sorry that he had spoken. Going round with the candidate every one seemed to think it necessary to shake hands; even an extremely dirty sweep, in spite of the abjurgations of his cleaner spouse, insisted upon doing so. "Don't you let 'im shake 'ands with yer, genelmen," she cried, wiping her hands on her apron in the peculiar manner of her class when they get ready for action. "I don't want to," I replied incautiously, with more truth than discretion. It brought on a rumpus, during which I beat a retreat.

My first acquaintance with Rufus Isaacs was by going to Foxhill to meet my old friend the Master of Elibank. J. M. Barrie was there too. Just before the election I met Rufus Isaacs in a shop. "We are still friends and

can shake hands?" he inquired, to which I replied, "Why not?" We chatted for a while and I told him that I was going out to the West Indies. "Well, Admiral," was his remark, "I wish you had gone a little sooner." Lord Reading is a genius and has a winning manner, but I am one of those who think it a mistake to send him to India as Viceroy. Nevertheless we can all unite in wishing him success.

I had to break my resolution as regards politics when Leslie Wilson, our present member, stood for Reading, but no more speeches, canvassing, thank you. In him we have an able man with a charming personality, who has proved himself a good and courageous soldier.

In February, 1910, my wife and I went out to Jamaica in the *Port Kingston*. We called at Bermuda, and visited some of the places so familiar to us in past happy days.

On arrival at Kingston we went to some old friends of mine near Spanish Town. The house had been badly damaged by the great earthquake, and the walls of the house were severely cracked and holed in places, but if you made up your mind that they were not going to fall on you and it did not come on to rain, all was well. My wife had not been in the West Indies before, and enjoyed all the tropical sights, especially a remarkable exhibition of fire-flies that occurred late at night as we drove along some low-lying land. We passed through a large area where these insects were in such quantities as to give the appearance of a luminous mist. I was also able to introduce her to three varieties of humming birds, those marvellous little creatures which are so fascinating to watch.

Kingston was in a deplorable state. Rebuilding had been started, and most of the public buildings and banks had been re-erected. At one place you would find all the side of a house gone, the rooms with their faded wall-papers looking like a gigantic doll's house. At another only a heap of bricks and mortar marked the place where a residence had stood ; the negroes' huts were mostly a mass of rubbish. Over two thousand people perished in this disaster and the subsequent fire. It was maintained by the Insurance Companies that the earthquake caused the fire (in which case they were not liable for the result of an act of God). The inhabitants held otherwise. In the end it went against the Companies.

There was a good deal of looting during that time, the negroes being the principal offenders. An eccentric friend of mine told me that while he was in charge of a fire brigade a negro carrying some plunder passed by, and my friend called upon him to assist in moving the hose. The man refused in offensive terms, whereupon the hose was turned on him with the unexpected result that his neck was broken. In relating this story my friend said, "I was never so —— glad in my life, and the beggar had only left-foot boots after all!" "What did you do with the body?" I asked. "Threw it into a yard, where it passed for an earthquake stiff."

We embarked for home, with the Stockleys and their daughter Betty, in the *Tortugueiro*, one of Elders and Fyffes' steamers. There were only two other passengers, both friends of theirs, and we were a happy little party. The voyage was most remarkable; the ship was on an even keel the whole way, and a glass of water would have stood on the table all that time without being spilled.

We arrived at Liverpool and proceeded to Manchester through the canal, putting up at the 'Midland,' a most bewildering caravanserai. That was the occasion when I was taken to be the Admiral of the Fleet.

On May 6, 1910, King Edward died. Not a long reign, but he had time to prove himself a Monarch who had the interests of his people at heart. It seems to me as if Queen Victoria founded a new dynasty; her grandson has followed in their footsteps. The Royal House is now of Windsor and not of Guelph as it was with them. Would it not be possible to borrow from the Chinese and antedate, commencing the later House with Victoria?

On June 23, 1911, King George and Queen Mary were crowned; a procession through the streets of London was part of the ceremony. It passed the U.S. Club, where my wife and I had seats. Not the least enjoyable part of the affair was the number of old friends we met that day.

On January 26, 1914, I started on another trip with Stockley. We were bound to Colon, via Jamaica, to visit the Panama Canal, our steamer, the *Patia*, a much larger ship than the previous one. These 'Banana Boats' are well known. Painted white and of an attractive appearance, they have a good speed and are most comfortable ships, the welfare of the passengers being given every consideration.

At Kingston I put up at the Jamaica Club, which was infinitely preferable to the Myrtle Bank, a new, hot and noisy place that had taken the place of Constant Springs then, alas! closed. I remember the old Myrtle Bank in my *Tartar* days ; it was a ramshackle place then. I went to a dance there and at supper decided that the food had been out in the sun too long, or had taken an epidemic of some sort, for I tried several delicacies and got rid of each mouthful by throwing it under the table—very reprehensible I admit. I thought I was unobserved, and got the shock of my life when my partner observed in dulcet tones, "I hope they keep cats here."

We went on in one of the United States Fruit Ships, the *Santa Marta,* a very fine ship, in which we reached Colon.

Colon is a hot place even in February, and it was dry, so we made good on lemon squashes. Our first visit was to the Gatun Dam, a stupendous construction that has caused the formation of a huge lake by damming the River Chagres. The United States knew what they were about when they acquired the canal zone ; without it the region could never have been made healthy. Under Colonel Gorgas' administration it has almost become a health resort. He was away during my visit, but I called on Colonel Goethals, the Chief Administrator, and met a very pleasant man.

The Culebra Cut was still giving trouble. The American Engineers will compete with it successfully. But what will happen when the inevitable earthquake comes?

Panama is an interesting city. The fortifications have been constructed in a most ambitious style, and when the bill was presented to the King of Spain he said that he thought he could see the walls, they must be so prodigious. From Colon we returned to Avonmouth in the *Patuca.*

I made another of these delightful trips in 1920. The terrible experiences of the last few years had rather affected me, and I gladly accepted Stockley's invitation to go to Santa Marta. We left early in the year in the *Boyano,* a fine ship of over 8,000 tons. My friend, with his usual consideration, arranged for me to have a cabin to myself, a great boon to an old man. Our great disappointment was that our wives would not risk the chance of *mal de mer,* but Betty Stockley, who is a universal

favourite (especially with a certain old Admiral), came with us, bringing a friend, Ruth Grimshaw, and these two had the time of their lives. Dancing, sports, fancy-dress balls and deck games made the time pass most pleasantly for them as it did for the other young women on board.

I found a great change in Jamaica. The people had become restless, and a peculiarly strange mentality prevailed. The negroes were rather more insolent than usual. I think a great many of them had been to England and had been treated too well ; some of them had actually brought back white wives, poor wretches ! I found some old friends staying at the Manor House beyond Constant Springs (now shut up) ; these were Commander T. C. St. Andrew St. John and his wife, and Mrs. Hire. It was full, but the military authorities lent me a tent ; we pitched it in the garden, and it was delightfully cool at night. Myrtle Bank was a perfect rabbit warren, and was further enlivened by a Jazz Band of negroes that played syncopated music all the afternoon and evening.

I embarked in the *Coronado* with our party again and we arrived at Santa Marta, a place I have already described. The Fruit Company had built a fine wharf and accompanying sheds, had constructed a railway to the banana fields forty miles up-country, and had obtained a concession, turning it into a veritable oasis, with most comfortable bungalows and a fine hospital. The banana fields (only one of many in Central America) embraced 40,000 acres. We travelled for about forty miles and then pulled up at a bungalow for lunch. By this time the temperature had risen to 112 degrees in the shade, and in the dining-hall, which was enclosed in minute wire-netting to keep out insects, it felt at times like a blast from the Inferno. We paid a visit to Bolivar's house, the ornaments of which are cheap and tawdry. This also refers in a lesser degree to the statue of the Liberator that stands in the compound.

On returning to the ship we found them shipping the fruit. The loading was being carried on from truck-loads at six different ports by means of revolving endless belts. The dockers, all Colombians, a sturdy, stalwart race, were most proficient. The bunches were placed on the belt, travelled up to the ship, seized by the men there, and handed over to others to be passed below ;

the whole show went on with clockwork regularity. The men are of an Indian type and a deep copper colour. Some might be described as handsome, as were their women, especially when they indicated a strain of Spanish blood. The work went on continuously, and the *Coronado* took 14,000,000 bananas in less than twenty-four hours. The bananas are stowed in a specially prepared hold, where the temperature is carefully maintained at a requisite height. Our return voyage then commenced, and had a most beneficial effect on me. I felt all the better for it. There is nothing like a sniff of the briny.

For some time I had been a Nautical Assessor to the House of Lords, and in July, 1914, I was summoned for the final appeal of *Olympic* v. *Hawke*. It will be remembered that these vessels collided in the Solent. There is a peculiar charm about these sittings. The stately grandeur of the House begets solemnity, and the officials seem to be imbued with it. You feel removed a vast distance from the commonplace outside world; indeed, you feel that a jest would be an impropriety. Unconsciously you speak in hushed tones. As you enter the House and pass the vacant thrones and Woolsack, and view the long rows of empty seats, the first thought is of the Royalties and the great men who have occupied them. The House itself is an architectural triumph, and the decorative scheme seems to be perfect. Its silence and serenity is only broken by the muffled sound of the great clock in the neighbouring tower, and its chimes set to "Oh Lord our God, be thou our guide, that by Thy help, no foot may slide." The appeal is always heard at the opposite end to the throne. The Lord Chancellor sits facing the gallery, underneath which are the opposing (and imposing) Counsel and their myrmidons. The Law Lords sit on front benches on each side of the Lord Chancellor; there are usually four or five of the former. The two Nautical Assessors sit behind the Lord Chancellor. Once I sat down on one of the front benches. A horrified official moved me on, saying, "Do you know you've made yourself a Lord?" I replied that it was as near as I could ever hope to get.

The above appeal was heard by Lord Haldane and the Lords Atkinson, Sumner and Shaw. The cases are not interesting to the general public; it prefers divorce and crime. Here one hears the ablest lawyers of the day. Most sailors hate lawyers (to be called a sea-

lawyer is a great insult in the Navy), but I think they are a much maligned lot. A Lieutenant, who had the reputation of being a Sea Lawyer, irritated No. 1 so much that he unwisely called him a 'Damned Fool.' The S.L. retorted with a more offensive epithet, whereupon No. 1 had him up before the Captain. "What is this I hear? The First-Lieutenant tells me you called him by a most offensive name. Do you admit it?" The S.L. replied, "I think the First-Lieutenant ought to say what he called me first." The other fell into the trap and said, "I called him a damned fool, Sir." "There you are, Sir," said the S.L, "but I really forget what I called him." People come in during the sitting under the guidance of an official, but they are merely sightseers. No doubt the official explains what is going on, but they soon become bored stiff, for it must be like going into a cinema in the middle of a film ; you can't make head or tail of it. From my post of vantage I could see that the guide was pointing out the celebrities, and I noted that the conclusion was invariably greeted with merriment. It puzzled me, but I think I hit on the solution. I will illustrate it by a story of a soldier friend who went to Portsmouth to call on a line regiment of no particular prominence. There were three regiments in garrison, the others being a Highland and a Fusilier regiment. He inquired of a boy where the regiment lay. The boy said, "Are they the Kilties?" No." "Are they the 'Airy 'Ats?" Again a negative. "Oh, them common soldiers." The Trinity Brother and I were the common soldiers!

Everything has a weak point—if you can find it—and I believe that the House acts as a powerful soporific, especially after lunch. Whether it is the high-toned atmosphere or whether it is the subdued and deferential pleading I know not, but I had to fight very hard against drowsiness. I consulted one of the Lords as to what would happen if I did go to sleep. (Visions of the Tower scared me.) He said that the great thing was not to be detected. That afternoon I was petrified by an unmistakable snore—faint, but a genuine snore ; it came from my adviser. He slept as upright as a trooper on a horse, only the snore gave him away. I hasten to add that this did not occur at the *Hawke* case. I had better play for safety.

During one of the sittings we were treated to an

uncommon spectacle for a layman, namely, the summoning of the Faithful Commons for the King's approval to certain Bills. By the by, are they deserving of the title 'Faithful Commons' now? Some forty or fifty are avowed rebels! My colleague and I were stowed away in a snug corner, and presently, in obedience to a summons by Black Rod, a party of the people's representatives arrived headed by the Speaker and the Sergeant-at-Arms. The Lord Chancellor was now seated on the Woolsack, and disposed about him were other fully robed dignitaries. The titles of the Bills were then read by the Clerk of the Crown, and the Clerk of the Parliaments, at the termination of each, cried in a loud voice, "*Le Roy le Veult*"—the old Norman form of approval. In the case of a money Bill the Clerk of the Parliaments said, "*Le Roy remercie ses bons sujets et ainsi le Veult.*" When all were finished the F.C. were given permission to retreat to their own fastness. What impressed me was that many of the F.C. were so badly dressed; there were a few notable exceptions, but I felt disappointed with the people's representatives, and was glad that my connection was with another place. Probably now members draw £400 a year (their own valuation) matters have improved.

On the 3rd of August we were still sitting, but adjourned to the 20th of October. The war cloud had burst, and the world gone fighting mad. The Court duly met on the above date, and the appeal terminated in favour of the *Hawke*. She was afterwards lost in the war. Everyone must remember the terrible period we were passing through at the time of that last sitting. While waiting for the Court to assemble a very distinguished personage asked my opinion on the state of affairs. I said that "Things might have been better if the Liberal Government had not disbanded 30,000 infantry and two batteries of Artillery." At this the V.D.P. left me abruptly. He was a Liberal.

I was never under any delusion as to the duration of the war. From its commencement I felt convinced it would be a long and bloody affair. My belief that we were going to win never faltered. Although I felt that it would be a terrible experience, I never anticipated that the criminal and bestial mentality of the Germans would develop in the manner it did and add to the profound horrors of war. *Now* the irony of it all is that

in spite of the huge indemnity (which has not yet materialized) the German nation seems to be better off than any other, with the exception of the United States. Is it because it recognizes the necessity for hard work instead of short hours, slurred work and strikes?

At that time I had my only psychical experience. One morning during the first dreadful weeks of anxiety, I distinctly heard a voice that said, "This war will last five years." When people asked my opinion, I said so. It was not popular, but it came out pretty nearly right. Of course I was regarded as a pessimist at first. My wife has had several psychic experiences, but they are far too private and personal to be mentioned.

I have studied spiritualism for many years, and if believing that our departed are often with us, and that our future life is a more glorified existence than we experience here is the hall-mark of a spiritualist, I am one. As long ago as 1880 I met the well-known medium Eglinton and I have sat with Husk and Mrs. Wreidt, the latter for 'direct voice.' I have had experience of private and public clairvoyance, now I do not attend public séances. But I know there are hundreds of mediums in private circles who are never heard of outside them. I have met many people who have had extraordinary experiences.

I believe that our future life is graded in spheres, and that all who have lived criminal or degraded existences commence on the lowest, but have a chance of redemption, and that part of the work of those in higher spheres lies in helping them.

I hope I shall not be misunderstood when I say that a glorified earthly existence would be more preferable to me than the ordinary theological theory of after life. We have to look forward to an eternity. Is there anything we should like to do eternally?

I have read a great amount of literature on the above—books by Sir William Barrett, Sir William Crookes, W. J. Crawford, Leon Denys, Sir Conan Doyle, Cammille Flammarion, Professor Geley, Admiral Usborne Moore, Professor Lombroso, Sir Oliver Lodge, F. Myers, Ellis Powell, Baron von Shrenck Notzing and Dr. A. R. Wallace among them; so if I err I do so in good company. I have been a regular subscriber to *Light* for years. I think I am in better case than an individual who upbraided me with believing in such 'Rubbish,' yet

absolutely refuses to sit down thirteen at table or go under a ladder, who carries an extraordinary-looking object on his motor-car that he calls a 'Mascot,' yet which did not prevent his chauffeur running over and killing a child.

Those early days were very exciting, and the United Service Club was crowded during the crisis with members talking over affairs. I formed one of a small group. One man had just returned from Asia Minor. He said the Armenians were being massacred wholesale, not by the Turks but by the Kurds, upon which I remarked, "All *Kurds* must have a *way*, but theirs seems to be a particularly bad one." I believe these ruffians to be the most bloodthirsty crowd in existence.

It is not my intention to write about the war, but I propose to deal with Red Cross work in the County of Berks, with which, as County Director, I was kept fully occupied. A County Director is the Executive Head of the Branch and the direct channel of communication with Headquarters in London and the Military Command.

In February, 1913, I was invited by Mrs. Benyon, the wife of the Lord Lieutenant, to take the above post. Colonel Sir Donald Robertson, who had hitherto held it and who had done a lot of spade work, had gone to live in London, and resigned. I was occupied with the *King Alfred*, but accepted. I had had the pleasure of being associated with Mrs. Benyon in some public work, and had been impressed by her ability and organizing qualities. She had been the chief agent in forming the Branch, and her death, that occurred on March 28, 1919, deeply affected all who knew her.

I found 27 detachments, with a total personnel of 767, and I at once got to work inspecting them. These inspections were arranged with the Southern Command, which supplied a medical officer. Part of my duty was to raise fresh detachments, and we reached a maximum during the war of 34, with a total personnel of 1,461.

On July 18, 1914, the Lord-Lieutenant held a review of Reserve men of Berks ; they mustered three battalions, and in response to his invitation the Red Cross supplied another, which I commanded ; it was a unique experience. I marched at the head of 356 nurses and 217 orderlies. They were most enthusiastically received by the crowd.

Our First Aid and Nursing Classes were largely attended, and at one of these classes a candidate, during

the *viva voce,* was asked to explain the functions of the stomach. She thought furiously for a few seconds and then replied, "To keep the petticoat up."

At the outbreak of war we opened the first hospital at Didcot on the 17th of August, and others in quick succession. At the conclusion of the war we had organized twenty-seven hospitals. The most interesting opening ceremony (from my point of view) was at Ascot on October 1st, in the Grand Stand. The late Field-Marshal Lord Roberts was present, much to our gratification. Both his daughters were members. I believe that this was the last public function performed in England by Lord Roberts ; he seemed in good spirits, and treated everyone with his usual pleasant and courteous manner.

In my office I used to be besieged by aspirants for Red Cross work. I enlisted the services of Miss Amy Waltham, a member of a local detachment, as Secretary and she now holds the post of Assistant County Director. Other volunteers came, and at one time four were working with me. By the time the Armistice was declared Berks had supplied 415 nurses for service abroad, all of whom had been selected by me from volunteers.

Most of the above hospitals were in private houses, a few in public buildings, and these provided 1,188 beds and treated 24,936 patients.

There is a sort of parrot cry that during the war the women were 'wonderful.' I prefer to say 'amazing.' These women had never been engaged in hospital work before, and seemed to have acquired a higher mentality and sense of responsibility. No trouble daunted them. I have seen girls who in peace-time would have been golfing, lawn tennising, dancing, dining and flirting, employed in scrubbing floors and washing dishes, without seeming to think it uncommon. I am sure that the conduct of the V.A.D.'s earned the affectionate gratitude of hundreds of thousands of patients who carried into private life an undying memory of the Red Cross Nurses who so devotedly nursed them.

One of the first ceremonies on opening a hospital was to distribute brassards in accordance with Army Instructions. It was never quite clear why they were necessary, but back of the official mind was the fear of invasion. I never shared that fear, neither did I see any reason for maintaining a large force on the East Coast. With the distribution, the unfortunate County Director

was compelled by Army Form C 337 to ask some extremely personal questions. These included some queries that no mere man would have dared to put to a woman unless sheltered by AUTHORITY. All such inquiries were conducted by me as privately as possible, especially with regard to 'Scars of Identification.' Once when I put this question I received a whispered reply, "I have been operated upon for Appendicitis." Although expected to identify all marks and scars, I hasten to add that I did not see *this* one.

The men's detachments shared in the good work. Ours in Reading performed all the convoy work, attending 484 and moving 31,474 patients. Of course no member of it was fit or eligible for service in war, but it passed 150 men into the Army. These men and women were voluntary and unpaid workers, and had to provide their own uniforms. I believe that ours was the only organization coming under the above conditions.

As stated, we sustained the loss by death of our Lady President during the war, but not until her valuable services had been recognized by the bestowal of a G.B.E. I had also to deplore the loss from the same cause of a good friend and colleague in C. J. Haviland, the Honorary Treasurer, whose work was taken up by C. E. L. Freeling. His cordial co-operation enabled me to carry on without a jolt of any sort. Indeed, one might say the same of all the members of our committee. We are now affiliated with the Territorial Army, the Secretary of which for Berks, Major M. L. Porter, is on our committee and a very good friend. In April, 1919, H.R.H. Princess Christian consented to become our Lady President. Everyone who has been brought into contact with H.R.H. will agree with me that no one could be more kind, considerate and gracious than she is. In June, 1918, I was gazetted a Companion of the British Empire Order. It really reflected more credit upon the members of the Branch than upon myself, for it was the unflinching loyalty and devotion to duty of all ranks that had enabled me to carry on and attain any success. The King presented me with the Order at Buckingham Palace in October, 1918.

After the Armistice the Berks Branch B.R.C.S. held a memorial rally in the Town Hall. At this I was presented with a gold cigarette case, an illuminated vellum book with 850 names of subscribers and a cheque that

helped me to purchase a pianola. What I had done to deserve such an avalanche of gifts is still a mystery to me. I could hardly thank all these kind people adequately. I shall not desert them as long as I can stick it.

Seven weeks after the Armistice, Headquarters B.R.C.S. sent out six County Directors to the battle-fields of France, and selected me to be one. They were all friends of mine, conspicuous among them being J. F. Badeley, of the London Branch, and the Hon. A. H. Holland-Hibbert; the latter had served in the Navy and the former is one for whom I have a great regard. Under Major Langridge we motored 850 miles, visiting all the places of most interest. It is not necessary for me to describe them; the utter desolation and horror of the entire region that we passed through is too terrible for words. Everything was just as the Allies had left it. The trenches were almost intact and the country strewed with ammunition, barbed wire, wrecked aeroplanes and motors, and the refuse of war. Conspicuous everywhere in every conceivable place were graves, some solitary on the side of a trench or in the open, and others massed together with groves of crosses. It brought home the woe this ghastly war has caused.

Zeebrugge aroused my feelings of pride as a naval officer. Big Bertha, surrounded by craters made by our aeroplane bombs, excited astonishment. Vimy Ridge, with all the surrounding country an obliterated ruin, filled me with admiration of the bravery of our men; and Arras, Albert and Amiens with disgust for the Huns. The ruined villages and small towns (in most cases a heap of stones) excited utmost pity for the unfortunate inhabitants, and the whole combined gave me feelings of hatred of the Hun. Such is briefly all that I can write of this distressing experience.

My friends arranged for me to visit the grave of our son. He fell two months before the Armistice; his body, with a hundred other officers and men, lies in a little Cemetery at Ecoust St. Mein, not far from Moeuvre. Our lad's body lies next to two of his men—as he would have wished—killed by the same shell. From August 22, 1918, to September 29th, B battery, 56th Brigade lost 58 killed and 75 wounded out of a strength of 180. He had commanded the battery for eighteen months. His men erected a cross with the inscription *Dulce et*

decorum est pro patria mori. I have reason to believe that they were devoted to him, and I know that he refused a Staff billet, as he would not leave his officers and men. Many of his brother officers have been to see us, and many more have written. Time heals wounds, but it does not fill the vacant chair. With the death of our son my branch of the family becomes extinct, but it is still continued through my cousin, Ernest James, a retired Rear-Admiral. From 1916 to 1918 he served, as a Captain R.N.R., in the *Sapphire*. He was awarded a C.B.E. and an Italian order. He had already gained some decorations, and the Royal Humane Society's medal for saving life. He married Edythe, a daughter of Senator Macdonald, of British Columbia, and they have one son a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy.

Sometimes I think, 'What has the death of the flower of our manhood done for our country?' I look around and see no consoling answer. We *won* the war, that is to say Great Britain is not under the German heel, and that is all we can say. The world is in every way worse off than it was before the war, and I am not the only one who feels this.

What if these legions of young men are now asking themselves if their sacrifice has been in vain? The only comforting factor is that sincere homage is paid to our dead, and assuredly they are not forgotten by their comrades of all ranks.

So far it seems as if most countries of the world, in addition to being in a state of unrest, are ready to fly at each other's throats, Europe especially. We see Spain, that kept out of the war, now engaged in a fierce struggle with the Moors. Germany is living in a state of instability, greatly modified by the presence of the Allied Force on its frontier, with a large party scheming to restore a fallen and discredited Emperor, who sits, like a spider in its web, ready for action, instead of having been brought to trial for his acquiescence in brutal crimes.

The Near East seems to be preparing for more conflict, and stands (like the traditional cowboy, with hands—clawlike—over his guns) ready to pull and shoot, meanwhile waiting to see whether Greece or Turkey will come out top-dog. Russia has become the 'Awful Example,' and is horrifying a shuddering world that endeavours to show that it is not yet completely callous to misery. The Bolsheviks have given an object-lesson

that has even proved too much for men of the same kidney in other countries. As regards the Far East, all those who have any acquaintance with conditions there are in a state of considerable apprehension from day to day as to what may happen. We have had one or two examples as to what befalls the man who deals firmly with sedition and outrage. The League of Nations, that was to have provided an Earthly Millennium, is struggling in its birth, and we do not feel assured that it will survive it. I have more faith in a firm alliance of leading Powers as France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan and the United States.

Those who have done me the honour of reading my book may agree with me that I have seen some remarkable changes during my life. I will mention a few at random. The establishment of the telegraph (to be ousted by wireless), the completion of the railway system (to yield to electric transport), supersession of manual labour by machinery, the telephone, the gramophone, the cinematograph, wireless telephony, the aeroplane, the internal combustion engine, the bicycle, the automobile, the turbine, and the use of oil fuel, that in its turn will be superseded by electricity. On the other hand, we have improved the methods of killing each other. Monster guns, the torpedo, hydroplanes, submarines and vast advances in arms of precision, tanks, poison gas, bombs and high explosives. Where will it end? The former category tends toward civilization and is for our advantage, the latter toward decivilization. Unless we brace up, give up strikes and get to work, as the French, Belgians and Germans have, the fate of Assyria, Egypt, Greece and Rome may be ours. It is not yet too late to choose.

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